

A STUDY OF Rural Society: ITS ORGAN- IZATION AND CHANGES



REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION

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WE DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO THE YOUTH OF
RURAL AMERICA
WHOSE INTELLECTUAL AND
SPIRITUAL POWERS AND DESIRES
WILL DETERMINE HER FUTURE

Editor's Introduction

THE year 1935 was a significant one in the development of rural sociology, for it marked the publication of *A Study of Rural Society* by Kolb and Brunner. In my introduction to the volume, I spoke of the agricultural crisis. This crisis has continued despite the efforts of the American people to resolve it. The situation has not remained stationary. The five years since the original publication of the book have been as significant for rural life as any like period of time in the history of agriculture.

Consequently, it has been necessary to make many additions to the book and to rewrite parts of it in order to incorporate the new developments. The effects of the long depression on rural communities have been extensively analyzed and summarized. These analyses were made from special studies by the authors of samples of local communities, as well as from a general knowledge of the statistical trends and descriptive data for the whole country. The impact of the powerful array of federal agencies in farm organization for welfare, credit, marketing, and production have been appraised.

A Study of Rural Society was dedicated to the rural youth of America. It is natural, then, that a new chapter should have been added on the problems of youth, for no aspect of rural life is of such consequence to the future of society as what is happening to farm boys and girls in a period when many economic opportunities which existed for their elder brothers and sisters, or for their parents, have been taken away by the depression. The plight of youth has been a major concern during the past five years of many organizations acting for the betterment of American life. The whole situation has been handled anew by the authors.

The original volume was written, however, not as a tract dealing with a temporary crisis. It was a fundamental treatise dealing with an important sector of American society. As such it still remains.

WILLIAM F. OGBURN

Preface to the Second Edition

THE GENEROUS RECEPTION accorded the first edition of *A Study of Rural Society*, together with the rapid pace of social change, accounts for the appearance of this second edition at this time.

The chief changes are these: the inclusion of a new chapter dealing with rural youth, and a new section on the agricultural laborer; rewriting and bringing up-to-date the chapters and sections dealing with rural relief, public health and welfare, and agricultural legislation and policy, including an expansion of the discussion on farm tenancy; and a bringing up-to-date of the rest of the volume on the basis of the new knowledge rural social research has made available since 1935. This last type of change is to be found particularly in the chapters on the rural community, standards of living, education, religion, merchandising, and recreation. The new data have been drawn especially from the studies of the rural research unit of the Work Projects Administration, from the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare of the United States Department of Agriculture, and from the third study of village-centered farming communities, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*. Thanks are due to the publishers of this lastnamed work, the Columbia University Press, for permission to quote therefrom.

One comment about the use of the book, in addition to those in the opening paragraphs of the Preface to the first edition, may be made. This is done in response to suggestions received. While there is no chapter or section devoted exclusively to social theory as such, there is a definite frame of reference within which the materials are organized and there is a conscious plan and theory implicit in the discussion throughout. In short, theory is viewed as a tool for study and as a means for understanding. Much concrete material is purposely presented because the authors believe that this is the best way to study society. It is recognized, of course, that it is not possible for

one study of the rural life in America to describe in detail every area or every kind of situation or institution. Hence, selection is necessary. For example, much use is made of the studies of the 140 village-centered communities because they make possible comparisons over time and indicate changes under way. Similarly, many of the materials on neighborhoods, communities, and the various social institutions are drawn from studies made in particular localities. They are oriented to reveal certain types of situations or problems or trends. The reader is expected to regard them, not as representing universals, but as types with which to compare or to contrast those conditions with which he is familiar, either by his own direct experience or by his own study and observation. In fact, we believe that in this way the science of rural society will advance. Readers can thus make their contributions whether they live in New England, the Deep South, the Far West, or elsewhere. It is the hope of the authors that this book will stimulate many to re-examine their own experiences in rural society and to carry forward the study of rural life in their own immediate areas. To these ends, many of the topics for discussion found at the close of the chapters were formulated. References in footnotes and at the conclusions of chapters will be helpful for exploring in greater detail the case materials which have been included.

It is the authors' hope that the new edition may serve its purpose even better than did the last. Many of the changes made were suggested by readers, and to them real gratitude is hereby expressed. It is the expectation that when the data of the 1940 census become fully available, those portions of the volume dealing with census facts will be brought up-to-date.

In addition to the indebtedness to the first two of the authors' secretaries mentioned in the Preface to the first edition, acknowledgment is made to Miss Jeanne Weiss who prepared nearly half of this edition for the press.

J. H. KOLB
E. DE S. BRUNNER

Preface to the First Edition

THIS book is offered because of a sincere desire to stimulate greater interest in and to promote more study of Rural Society. It is, in fact, a study of rural society, its organization and changes, from the point of view of important backgrounds, recent developments, and significant trends. It stresses the forces and the tendencies which have developed in the rapidly shifting rural scene since the advent of modern inventions like the automobile and the radio, and since the disturbing consequences of the World War and the long-continued agricultural depression have become all too apparent. Therefore, it gives considerable space to such movements as the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Federal Relief Administration, and the rise of Adult Education.

Rural society is considered as a unit made up of both farmers and villagers and the modern rural community as a town-country community. The rural and urban elements in general society are regarded throughout as inter-dependent parts of the larger whole. At the same time, a number of neglected aspects of rural life are discussed, such as the social influences of school curricula, the institutions of rural retail trade, local government, and national policies affecting agricultural life. While problems are not treated as such, many troublesome problems of rural life do emerge from these pages; nor are economic factors considered as separate from rural social life. Rather, the myriad activities and institutions associated with making a living are regarded as an essential part of rural society and of the social behavior of its people.

Opening with a brief discussion of the nature of rural society, which constitutes the first chapter, the book is organized into five parts. Part I considers the group life of rural people, the family, the neighborhood, the village, the community, and the interrelations of town and country as well as rural and urban. Part II directs attention to rural people themselves, their origins and characteristics, the composition of the rural population and its mobility. Part III reviews the social economics

of agriculture and the institutions associated with farming as a means of earning a livelihood, with special reference to the events of the last few years and the New Deal. Part IV describes the organization, recent changes, and trends of rural institutions such as the home, school, church, and agencies for recreation, health and social welfare, and then in national terms, the apparent trends and possible future policies for rural America are considered in Part V.

In classroom use these five parts may be interchanged, provided their relationships are made clear. Individual chapters may also be given detailed or limited study depending upon the degree of specialization of courses within the institution.

Two main sources of data are utilized: the 1930 Censuses of Population, Agriculture and Retail Distribution, together with numerous other official reports published since then; and numerous field surveys conducted by the authors since 1919, many of them nation-wide in scope, and culminating in the survey, *Rural Social Trends*, the rural section of President Hoover's Research Committee on Recent Social Trends.

The authors desire to acknowledge their indebtedness to the McGraw-Hill Book Company of New York City for permission to quote frequently from their previous book, already alluded to, *Rural Social Trends* and to Harper and Brothers of New York City for similar permission to reproduce a few paragraphs from their publication, *The Protestant Church as a Social Institution*.

Thanks are also due to a number of their colleagues who have read and helpfully criticized various chapters, including Professor W. F. Ogburn of the University of Chicago, Professors Kimball Young, E. L. Kirkpatrick and A. F. Wileden of the University of Wisconsin, and Professors Frank W. Cyr, Fannie Dunn, Mabel Carney, Harold F. Clark and Lyman Bryson and Dr. Irving Lorge of Columbia University.

Special thanks are due to Mr. Anthony Netboy who read and edited the entire work and to the authors' secretaries who typed and prepared the manuscript for the printer, the Misses Josephine Kronenberg, Aileen Karppinen and Katherine McGrattan.

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A STUDY OF
Rural Society

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF RURAL SOCIETY

AMERICA, despite her recently acquired huge cities, is a nation of rural backgrounds and traditions. Few are the families of native stock that do not trace back to the soil within two generations. The imagery of the national anthem is rural. The democracy so widely cherished is soil-born. Many social attitudes have their root in the experiences of frontier and farm.

Notwithstanding the great industrial zones, agriculture is still a very important part of the nation's total economic life. More capital is invested in it than in any other type of enterprise. It gives employment to more persons than any other single industry; indeed, it is exceeded by only two major occupation groups in its share of the nation's gainfully employed. Its purchases keep the wheels of industry turning one third or more of the time. Its products load the majority of the freight cars outside of the East. Its surpluses make up from one third to one half of our foreign export trade. And, of course, its soils bear and sustain the crops, and livestock that answer the daily prayer for bread.

The human side of agriculture. Soils, crops, and livestock are the concern of the physical sciences related to agriculture, but there is also a human side to agriculture. The tiller of the soil and his family, and those who care for his immediate physical, social, and economic needs are at least as important as the soil and its products. In short, successful agriculture has three concerns: farming as such, the efficient, profitable marketing of the products of the farm, and living the good life. To overlook any one of these three is dangerous for the individual farmer and for society. The aim of better farming is to secure better returns. The objective of better business is to support or achieve security, justice, culture, education, and all those

personal and social satisfactions that enter into winning the final objective of human effort, better living. Neither efficient farming nor plentiful profits, however, are guarantees in themselves of better living. There is still the question of the human material and its capacity to measure up to the standards that better living demands. Consequently, the study of rural society and of the human element in agriculture is one of vast importance.

In the expansion period of national development this fact, axiomatic as it seems, was given little attention. It did not achieve official recognition until 1908 when President Theodore Roosevelt appointed his now famous Country Life Commission. The classic report of this commission marks the real beginning of the country life movement in the United States. It dealt with the conditions, needs, and aspirations of rural people. It pointed out both deficiencies and assets in rural life, and showed how rural social institutions, such as the school and church, could be improved. These and other institutions gradually began to respond to the challenge of this report. The movement that resulted is today carried on by the American Country Life Association, an agency through which the various specific agencies of rural service are co-ordinated and in which they participate.¹

It is the purpose of this book to examine the whole complex of social arrangements, group characteristics, traits, and institutions that are concerned with rural living and go to make up rural society.

RURAL SOCIETY

Its people. In any consideration, then, of rural society, the people composing it are a basic consideration. America was once, of course, entirely rural. Up to our entry into the World War it was half rural, and even today the percentage is well over two fifths. Twenty-seven of our forty-eight states in

¹ Office at 105 East Twenty-Second Street, New York City. Benson Y. Landis, Executive Secretary. Official Organ, *Rural America*.

1930 were more rural than urban, all but a few more rural than the nation as a whole. Moreover, from these rural people has come a crop more important than any other: perhaps half the boys and girls born into rural homes, at least in the half-century period prior to 1930, migrated to the city and thus replenished the less fertile urban population. These matters are given detailed attention in Part II.

Its institutions. So, too, a study of rural society is concerned with a study of social institutions and social relationships and their changes, with the reasons for such changes. The school is a social as well as an educational institution; the church is social as well as religious, and so with others. This is to say that basic interests such as education, religion, health, government, and the like, institutionalize themselves in organizations through which persons co-operate in achieving their expressed ends. These organizations influence and are influenced by the community. Much of the life of rural society flows through them.

Its groups. There have been those who argued that the citizens of rural society were individualists, living alone and caring little for friend or foe. Evidence for this conclusion is hard to find. Even the hardy pioneers took their families with them or they soon acquired them. "Neighbor" became a trenchant term, setting off in sharp relief those who were entitled to friendly confidence from those who were regarded as strangers or "foreigners." Neighborhood groups and family groups have played and continue to play very important rôles in the more personal drama of rural life. Modern facilities for travel and communication give the community of town and country its opportunity and permit rural people to seek companionship on the basis of special interests. In fact, so specialized have some of these special interest groups become that concern is expressed in some quarters lest families, communities, and even personalities be pulled apart. For this reason, questions of community organization and integration are most timely.

Its wealth. The consumption of wealth becomes an impor-

tant consideration, fully as significant as its production and even its distribution. This has for some time been clear to rural leaders and in these days when the Federal Government is so largely devoting its efforts to balancing the production of goods and their consumption, it is probably self-evident. The consumption of wealth in any community may be an aid in analyzing its standards of living. The distribution of expenses within the total income available indicates the values that are held by the family or community. For example, many a family or community prefers to do without electricity and modern heating equipment in order to have automobiles.

But the matter goes deeper. American economic society is organized on the basis of the profit motive, however variously that term is defined, and this has resulted in a certain mode of life. It accounts, for instance, for the protection society affords the institution of private property, which in rural society is so closely associated with land possession, and for the insistence of business upon "free competition." One has only to consider the contrasting attitude in present-day Russia to realize how completely different attitudes toward wealth and its consumption, profits and their making, possession and use change drastically the social arrangements, laws, and institutions of a people, so far as they relate to these things. Thus the whole consumption of wealth, not only of food, clothing, and shelter within the home, but of those social utilities including education, religion, recreation, and welfare within the community must be considered in any study of rural society.

Its policies. Although the phrase "social planning" has only recently become a shibboleth, planning and policy-making have always been functions of any society and they must probably become even more important functions. In planning for rural America a study of rural society is essential, for policy-making requires knowledge of the situations and agencies involved in the plans. People require study in planning as well as land in zoning, or crops and livestock in farming. The naïve assumption that any group of persons will fall in with

any plan about which they have not been consulted and which has not taken the social situation into account has been proved false so often in history that its survival is one of the world's mysteries.

Tradition plays its part here. Despite the lowest cotton price in years, the head of a large plantation in the South, scion of a family of distinction in his state, remarked in 1932, "The Lord meant this country to grow cotton. It's done so for two and a half centuries. Why should I change?" Religion and nationality play their parts also. The Japanese have never competed with the wheat growers of the Pacific Coast. Their excursions into agriculture were confined to those specialties requiring intensive hand cultivation, the stoop and squat labor that was so largely required in their rice paddies at home.

Sentiment, too, plays its part. It may be a common-sense matter for a few isolated families in the Ozarks or on the too sterile soil of some dry-farming area to avail themselves of a plan to move elsewhere. But perhaps they share the pioneer's love of solitude, perhaps they have a deep attachment to the familiar scenes of their home, perhaps life gains in zest because of their constant battle to outwit nature and wrest a living from soil never intended to support human life. Perhaps the little community is one bound by religious ties and settled in such a place to keep itself "unspotted from the world." Such social and socio-psychological considerations will, if not taken into account, upset the best laid plans.

SOCIAL CHANGE

All society is caught in the grip of social changes of considerable moment and velocity, and rural society is no exception. No one, of course, can predict how long this period will continue. In such times of adjustment, much of the surface interest is naturally captured by political changes, nor are these unimportant. But political arrangements are but a device for expressing social judgments. Public opinion often changes before shifts in the political scenery occur. More

fundamental are economic changes, and more important are changes in attitudes and philosophies, registering profound shifts in convictions. With these latter come changes in the social processes themselves.

The discussion to follow does not explain how to organize and manage an agricultural marketing co-operative, how to draw up contracts, deal with the railroads and the terminal markets, and so on. That is outside its province. It is, however, concerned with the growth of the co-operative movement in rural America as a social movement; with the fact that in many respects organizations for economic co-operation are affected by the same factors and in somewhat similar ways, as are rural organizations for non-economic co-operation; and with the all-social implications of economic co-operation. It is important to grasp this distinction. Social science is the poorer because of the assumption on the part of some of its scientists that anything somewhat economic is wholly economic. Sociology has much to contribute through adequate analysis of the social aspects of economic events, movements, and organizations. It can, if it will, breathe the breath of life into the "average man" and the "economic man" of the older schools of economists. These convictions are the reasons for including Part III on the social economics of agriculture and the changes in thought and action which are taking place in this sphere of agricultural life.

The challenge of the future arising out of these and other changes is sounded by Charles Beard and it lays a responsibility upon citizen and physical and social scientist alike. Dr. Beard, in a recent article in which he considers "The Promise of American Life," points out three fundamental ideas which he says have taken form in the United States in recent years, and are finding ever deeper lodgment in the American mind. Putting the case in simple terms he says: "Americans are now asking themselves three questions: What do we need in the way of food, clothes, shelter, comforts and conveniences for a decent, universal standard of life? What natural resources, technical arts and managerial skills do we have for supplying

these needs? Shall we not call our civilization a failure if it cannot bring the economy of abundance into realization?"¹

CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL AS COMPARED WITH GENERAL SOCIETY

Thus far in this introductory discussion no definition or characterization of rural society has been attempted. It is important before going further, both to define and to note some of the distinctive characteristics of rural society, in order to recognize why it should be studied apart from society in general and, in a sense, contrasted with it.

The United States Census counts as rural the farm population and all the non-farm population living in places of less than 2500 population. For the most part, this is the definition of this book, although here and there the rural affiliations of places up to 10,000 population are considered.

In the midst of a natural environment. Most obvious in a comparison of rural and urban society is the immediate environment. Rural people have space, especially the farm people. Once this meant isolation, but that has been greatly reduced by modern invention. They are close to nature. The "fruited plains" stretch away from the door of the farm home over which trees cast their protecting shade in summer and from which, perhaps in the distance, tower "the purple mountain majesties." Even in the villages and towns there are trees, gardens, lawns, detached houses. Nowhere are there the narrow streets, sky-reaching buildings, the elbowing crowds, the snarling traffic, and the congestion, noise, and turmoil of the city.

The rural scene shifts, of course, according to soil and topography. Here it is level, there rolling, yonder hilly. Here there is black loam, there sandy soil, or again the firmer texture of shale or lime; there waving grain, yonder the regimented rows of fruit trees, elsewhere the fluffy cotton or the myriad vegetable plants, never venturing far from the earth from which

¹ Cf. *The New Republic*, February 6, 1935, p. 352.

they forced their way into the light. Save along trunk highways, none of the earth is hidden by solid concrete with which man protects the earth's surface from the scarring pressure of mechanized transportation.

Climate, too, plays its part. The graceful date palm never courts the breezes where they bear any touch of the North. The sun of the plains is just enough for the grain but its greater generosity to the South and Southeast produces cotton or perhaps citrus fruit. Alfalfa yields to man five or six times a year in the frostless areas, once or twice in the regions mantled by snow and ice, through one third of the year. The machinist, the typist, the clerk, the banker, carried to and from work, perhaps beneath the ground in roaring subways, pursue their accustomed tasks without regard to wind or weather. The farmer and even the villager fit their task to nature's mood and the rhythm of the seasons and by the same token shift to a certain extent their attitudes and organizational programs. In short, rural Americans are close to nature. Urban Americans have built an artificial structure to escape nature so far as possible. Even where the cities have saved oases of trees and open spaces whither their inhabitants may crowd to remind themselves of what the country is like, nature is, so to speak, artificially on exhibit.

The family, a unit. In rural society people live in close proximity to their work. They can see the fields and orchards where their toil lies. They can hear the animals and chickens that are theirs to tend. They are never out of sight of their enterprise. For this reason the family has an absorbing common interest. Father, mother, and children are associated with living things, plants and animals, in the task of feeding the world. Every meal has the possibility of being a staff conference. Commutation is a word unused in the daily vocabulary of the rural family. Its members do not scatter to widely diversified tasks in different parts of the community by means of various sorts of transportation. In the rural world the individual adapts himself to the family situation. In the urban, the family adapts itself to the individuals that comprise it.

The family is, therefore, a supremely important rural social unit. In the economic life of the city family means little. In the country it means much. Especially in older communities the actions, achievements, and mistakes are judged in the light of the community's knowledge of the family unto the third and fourth generation. Measurably, though to a less extent, this is true in social relationships as well. But of all this more in Chapter II.

Rural organization simple. The physical spaciousness of rural life makes for a far lower density of population and restricts the number and possibly the power of human contacts, although not their depth. Conversely, within the community local group organization is simpler and not so highly specialized as in the city. Invariably the larger the community, even in rural terms, the larger the number of organized interests and agencies there are. But local rural communities do not possess medical and bar associations, councils of churches, and specialized trade groups, as do cities. If these and others exist at all, they are on a county basis.

Country and village, separate but united. The chapter thus far has several times differentiated between farm and village and yet has included both as belonging to rural society, as indeed the United States Census does by its definition. What are the relations between these two great elements in rural society?

In many parts of the world, notably in the Orient, this distinction cannot be drawn. There the agricultural village is the home of the farmer. From it each day he trudges to his fields. To it each night he returns, to mingle with his neighbors or join the village elders as they discuss the affairs of the community. Indeed in many parts of Europe this age-old pattern still persists and may never change. It is to be found chiefly where farms are small and easily reached. It is appearing again in certain restricted areas of specialized farming in this country where farms are small as farms go in the United States, and where they can be reached quickly by automobile. This is especially noticeable in a few citrus-fruit centers on the Pacific Coast.

This, too, was the pattern in early colonial days, but soon the huge tracts of land to be had for the taking and the clearing spurred men to venture to live upon the broad acres they could not well reach daily from the village. It was in the Americas that agriculture first meant isolation for the farmer and his family. For a time it seemed as if the agricultural village was thereby doomed. The self-sufficing plantations of the South seemed to show the trend. They needed but one center to a county and the county seat came to be something of what the market town is to much of the Orient today, a place whither the farmer went periodically for the relatively rare goods and services he could not supply for himself.

Self-sufficing agriculture did not continue in the United States, however. Specialization set in as will be seen later. More and more, the farmer needed a near-by center where he could secure supplies, clothing, medicine, and other professional services. As time went on, spurred by the automobile which reduced the time required to cover the distance from farm to town, the farmer, as Part I shows, tended to use his village more and more. It became increasingly a social as well as an economic center and rural America has shifted its capital from the crossroads hamlet to the village or town. There the farmer trades and banks. Thither he goes more and more for the education of his children, for his organized religion, for social life and recreation. The use he makes of it varies with the region, the crop, and the distance from the center, but the trend is clear throughout the nation. This dualism in the structure of the rural community accompanied by a high degree of integration and division of labor is another of the distinctive characteristics of rural society.

ELEMENTS OF RURAL POPULATION

The whole matter of rural population is discussed in Part II, but in this preview of rural society it is necessary to point out that it is made up of various elements, more or less akin, more or less different.

Farm population. There is first of all the great group numbering over 32,000,000 people in the open country, who live on the land, on farms, and whose major or sole task is to raise food or fiber from the soil. They are the primary producers, the followers of man's oldest occupation and most ancient art.

Non-farm population. Over 23,000,000 more persons live in close proximity to the farm group, under varying but essentially rural conditions. They are of several types. First of all are the 10,000,000 or more who reside in villages and hamlets which are within agricultural communities and which exist, as the previous section showed, to serve the farm group and themselves as well, in ways essential for rural and especially agricultural society as it has been organized in this nation during the last century.

Secondly, there are some 4,000,000 who live in industrial villages, given over to a single economic pursuit, such as mining, forestry, or the manufacturing of textiles. These people, as is shown in Chapter XXI, are in rural America but not completely of it. Their approximation of urban industrial conditions in units of population as small as these centers are creates situations and problems not only unique in rural society and social organization but also largely neglected. All these groups vary significantly in the composition and characteristics of their population and in their occupational distribution.

Finally, there are those who from choice, though city toilers, wish to approximate as closely as possible at least the physical setting that differentiates the setting of rural society: space, trees, gardens, sunlight, quiet. Numerically and socially, in terms of total interest, this is by far the least important group. Nevertheless, observing the growing numbers of this group, the increasing social integration of farm and village, and the influence of the automobile, the radio, and motion pictures in reducing isolation and spreading understanding, there are those who follow Dr. Galpin in characterizing not only rural population but rural society as "rurban."

WHY STUDY RURAL SOCIETY?

The study of rural society is a practical as well as a scientific pursuit. It supplies at least a knowledge of the importance of rural America in the national life, of the rural heritage of that life, and of rural-urban relationships. It shows the importance of social forces, groups, and organizations and the parts they play in national and community life. It furnishes, if not techniques, at least clues for the understanding of places where one works and lives, and indeed of the backgrounds of associates and friends.

These values grow out of such a study only if the attitude toward this subject of rural society is that of the student, of the scientist seeking facts and understanding, laying aside, so far as possible, preconceptions and adopting instead an objective approach. Such values may accrue to members of both rural and urban society. A study of rural society should give to rural residents a better understanding of the life about them which they are all too likely to take completely for granted. Rural leadership to be effective today needs the attitude of the student. City dwellers should benefit from a study of rural society if they come to recognize more fully the real interplay and interdependence of the great rural and urban forces and fortunes which, working together, may realize the dream of America, but which, pulling apart, may tear her asunder.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. List and describe very briefly five distinctive characteristics of rural society.
2. Make a list of what you consider the six chief deficiencies or problems in rural society today. How does your list compare with that of the Roosevelt Country Life Commission of 1908?
3. Rural society is said by some writers to be "individualistic." What do they mean by this? What do you think of this explanation?
4. What are the chief reasons for a study of the social and consumption relations of agriculture as compared, for example, with its production or distribution problems?
5. What forces have been playing upon rural society during the past quarter of a century which are producing social changes?

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PART I
RURAL SOCIETY
ITS ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

CHAPTER II

THE RURAL FAMILY

FAMILIES are the first social groups encountered in a study of rural society. They are important groups in any society, but especially so in rural life. The farm family is the working unit as well as the living unit. Any country scene is convincing evidence of this, for there in one cluster stand the house and the barn surrounded by smaller buildings and yards, with the fields beyond. The whole layout is called the "homestead" and it has a social connotation which means far more than such terms as "farm," "factory," or "store." These family groups are more isolated physically than are urban families, although they may not be more isolated socially, as some have assumed. Many intimate contacts are maintained with neighbors and with relatives.

The village family resembles the farm family in many respects. Its dwelling and place of business are not far apart; they may even be in the same building. Both home and business are located near neighbors and relatives with whom associations are personal. Judged by various characteristics, the village family stands between the country and the city family.

The family can be defined as a genetic group bound by kinship and marital ties. It is a group consisting of father, mother, and children, living together under one roof. Many times rural households are not so simply composed as this. A grandfather or maiden aunt may be living there also, or perhaps a younger family is living with the parents. There may be hired help or summer boarders also, and consequently it is necessary to distinguish between the immediate natural family and the larger household.

The younger family may live in a separate house on the same farm, on an adjoining farm, or in the same village as the parents.

There may also be married brothers or sisters, aunts or uncles. In this case it is the "great family" of relatives and kinsfolk. Frequently the great family is of more importance than is the individual family, in matters of social control, in perpetuating attitudes and forming opinions. This is especially true if its members live in the same locality and thus form the neighborhood group.

Family groups, like other groups in society, have their own social institutions such as home, standards of living, household systems, marriage, and divorce. Some of these will be considered in later chapters, but it is the family as a social group to which attention is given here. In common with other groups, families are not static but dynamic, always changing, adjusting and readjusting to their own internal as well as to their external environments.

THE EARLY AMERICAN FAMILY

As a background against which to view changes in the more modern rural family, a brief sketch of the earlier or pioneer family is drawn. Longer perspectives are useful in periods of seemingly rapid and radical changes. Literature abounds with stories of early settlement. A sort of "myth" has been built, sometimes deliberately, about the "early American family." It has its variations, from region to region, from New England to Southern plantation and Western pioneer, but in essentials it is much the same.

Land — private property in land — stands out in dramatic fashion as one of the important features of early American agricultural and family life. Questions of land, its utilization, taxation, and possession, continue to be dominating issues, as, for example, the land-planning policies of the New Deal. In the settlement days before and after the Homestead Act of 1862, ownership of land was the symbol of a domestic economy, whether for the Pennsylvania farmer, the Western pioneer, or the Southern planter. As Dr. Wilson has phrased it, "the household farmer owned his home. He built upon

his farm a homestead which represented his ideal of domestic and family comfort. He built for permanence. So far as his means permitted, he provided for his children and for generations of descendants."¹ This relationship of land, family, and home is the background for many novelists' interpretations of country life. It may be Whittier's *Snow Bound*; Hamlin Garland's *Son of the Middle Border*; Gladys Carroll's *As the Earth Turns*; or Louis Bromfield's *The Farm*. This relationship represents the "social origins" of the rural family.

Self-maintenance with a sense of isolation is another characteristic of the early rural family. The importance of this fact to agriculture and the business of farming will be detailed in a later chapter, but for the family and its household, it is the tradition which has been passed on in such stereotypes as "independence," "individualism," "integrity," and the like. Without doubt the roots of this tradition extend back into the Old World. Stories of the struggle of pioneer families attempting to maintain themselves economically, socially, and religiously, serve as contrasts for those who today are striving to remake rural society by such means as co-operative marketing, community organizations, or larger parish churches. How strange it sounds to hear Mr. Wright telling of his early family experiences in Otsego County, New York, in 1848. "Our new home was in a comparative wilderness; not a house was in sight. The nearest neighbors on the south and east lived over a mile from us. On the west, the nearest lived three fourths of a mile, and on the north over one fourth of a mile; and a thick dark forest intervened."² Today these would seem like near neighbors, too near perhaps for some kinds of commercial agriculture. The swing away from the idea of self-maintenance in some quarters of highly specialized production has been very wide, but like so many extremes, it has swung back again until one finds that "subsistence homesteads" are one emphasis within the present planning for agriculture. There can be

¹ Wilson, Warren H., *The Evolution of the Country Community*, Rev. Ed., p. 22. Pilgrim Press, Chicago, 1923.

² Wright, H. C., *Human Life: Illustrated in My Individual Experience*. Boston, 1849.

little doubt that the early isolation and the sense of independence did much to magnify the importance of the family and to intensify its relationships.

Kinship, with a sense of solidarity, was another important bond in the framework of the early family. This feature stands at least in partial contrast to the former, but it is questionable whether such complete independence or such entire isolation as some writers have suggested really did exist. A sense of kinship, of continuing a line of common descent, must have been a sustaining force in those pioneering experiences. Moreover, kinsfolk tended to settle in small clusters or neighborhoods as will be described in the next chapter. The pioneer family of Footes in Vermont, for example, sent some of its branches to New York, or "York State," as it was called. They, in turn, sent younger members to Ohio and to Wisconsin; and so on to Iowa and to California. No one individual family went alone; it was always in company with others, aunt or uncle, brother or sister, or cousin. Communication and contacts were relatively frequent. Letters flowed freely, and annual or semi-annual visits were made, even though it did take almost a week to return by team and buckboard from Iowa to Wisconsin. Fealty to kinsman, then, is one of the great heritages of the early rural family. This bond of the great family was a strong influence. To what extent it is a factor which can still be counted upon, and to what extent it has been dissipated by the greater mobility and by what may even be termed the larger independence of the modern family is a problem for the student of modern rural society to consider.

CHARACTERISTICS AND CHANGES OF THE PRESENT-DAY RURAL FAMILY

Can the rural family of the present be characterized and its changes sketched against the background of the early American rural family? Those who would understand rural society or would endeavor to modify it by design or plan, must know not only those forces and processes which are related to the past,

but also those which can be turned to new account. The rural family should be considered just as "family" and not as something different and apart, yet it does possess some characteristics which can be identified and which are useful for study.² Five of these will be considered here.

In the midst of its occupation. A striking characteristic of the farm family, and to a lesser extent of the village family, is that it lives in the midst of its occupation. Its residence is as fixed a part of the layout as are the barns, fields, or fences. The family and its homestead, together with the farm and its farmstead, make up the living and the working unit. This, then, is the physical and the social setting or environment in which the farm family group lives and works.

The village family included in the term "rural," is not so different in its setting. As is the case with so many village characteristics, the village family stands midway between farm and city families, partaking of the nature of each, but having traits of its own. It is not uncommon for a village retail or repair business to be conducted as a family responsibility and for the living quarters to be in the same or in an adjoining building. It is common indeed for the family to own its own land on which is found its house, its garden, and even its business establishment.

The occupational environment puts all the members of the family group into close contact with each other. It is in this world that the group develops and builds up its modes of behavior and its institutions and traditions. Acquaintance with this world is best gained by contact with those who live in it.

² No attempt is made to consider the whole field of the family. Other courses must be taken to supply that need or if such are not available, a minimum list of books will be useful. Re-emphasis is given to the point that the rural family is after all, a family and should be considered as such.

Ogburn, W. F., *Recent Social Trends*, chaps. xii, xiv. McGraw-Hill, 1933.

Groves, E. R., *The American Family*. Lippincott, 1934.

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Brief extracts from case stories, written by college students, of their own home are therefore given.¹

I believe my father should be considered an average father, judged by the standards of his community. He always seemed to me to put far more thought on having the best corn crop, the largest potatoes by the Fourth of July, etc., than he did on disposing of them to the best advantage. The income for the family was not adequate for the standards which were my mother's goal. There were times when I wonder how she contrived to manage as she did and give us the opportunities she did. We always had plenty of good food, but my mother's ingenuity, industry and instilling the necessity for care of materials into us were the factors which for years solved the problem of comfortable and attractive clothing for her large family.

All the domestic industries commonly done in the farm home of the twenty or thirty years previous to the present were done in our home with the exception of making cheese and of making any furniture, basketry, etc. These industries consisted of preparing and preserving home-grown meats; canning and preserving fruits and some vegetables; making butter; baking bread and pastries; washing, ironing, mending, and making much of the clothing. I recall that I had never had a dress which my mother had not made until the year before I graduated from high school. She had taught me to do plain sewing, but would not trust me with a dress, lest I should ruin the material.

My mother and the girls in our family did very little work in the fields, which was rather singular, since there were so many girls and only one boy, and since it was customary for women to work in fields. We, the girls, helped pick up potatoes, and pick sweet corn several summers when my father had contracted some for a canning factory. My mother did much work in the garden, always raised many chickens, and helped milk until brother assumed the task. My mother was always opposed to the girls learning to milk and none of us did. We thought it a lark to ride on the hayload, get a chance to lead the horses to water, etc. This was probably because we were not required to do so.

It is this sort of family life which has influenced students of the family to conclude that rural families have developed characteristics of their own. LePlay, the great French scholar

¹ Lively, C. E., *Readings in Rural Sociology*, vol. 1, "Life in the Farm Family." Mimeograph by H. L. Hedrick, Columbus, Ohio, 1933.

of family life, places a great deal of stress on what he terms "successful families," upon the sentimental attachment or relationship which exists between the family group and its homestead or its "hearth." Thus, at least one of the backgrounds of the early family seems to have extended its influence through the years to the present, namely, the organization of a family occupation about the utilization and possession of land.

As a matter of fact, agriculture is the last of the great industries to be operated on the individual family unit plan. Although it must be recognized that great variations occur among the various types of farming such as cotton, the grain, the dairy, and the fruit or truck farms, essentials of the family pattern are, nevertheless, found in them all. The question arises, of course, regarding future trends. If the Industrial Revolution completely overtakes agriculture, what will become of the rural family; will it become just like urban families and lose its distinguishing characteristics? There have been some evidences which pointed in this direction just prior to 1929, but more recently these trends seem to be checked. Final conclusions are untimely. But interestingly enough, as a later chapter will show, small farms increased during the period, 1920 to 1930. This, together with the shock which large-scale, mass-production farming has received since 1929, leaves little doubt that the family type of farm is destined to remain in many sections of this country for a long time. There is evidence to suggest that government itself is inclined to encourage family farming to offset in some degree the terrific losses in city employment. Attempts are also being made to iron out the inconsistencies of taking farms away from families by introducing credit and financing plans which can cope with the emergency.

More family groups. The early American family was part of a domestic economy and the rural family in close contact with its occupation has continued this system to a greater degree than have families in other sections of society. Recent trends toward smaller farms, the decided check in the migra-

tion of rural young people to cities, and the great pressure toward family self-maintenance indicate a continuation of the system for some time to come. It is to be expected, therefore, that in terms of adult population relatively more family groups or units are found in rural society. This is true because country people marry earlier in life; the union is less frequently broken; and there is a tendency for the unmarried and those left by broken marriages, either through divorce or death, to migrate. This last tendency is especially the case with country girls and women.

In 1930 there were about thirty million families in this country. Of this total about six and a half million were on farms, and nearly six million in rural non-farm territory.

Comparison of the percentages of married men and women fifteen years of age and over for rural and for urban society, as recorded by the census, is shown in Table 1. It is clear from

TABLE 1. PERCENTAGE OF MARRIED MEN AND WOMEN FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE AND OVER FOR THE URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, 1930 *

Geographic Divisions	Rural				Urban	
	Farm		Non-Farm		Male	Female
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
United States, total . . .	57.9	66.0	61.1	63.9	60.5	58.5
New England.	54.3	63.7	60.5	60.2	58.6	54.3
Middle Atlantic.	55.9	65.7	61.2	63.4	59.1	57.6
East North Central	57.2	68.0	61.6	64.7	61.6	61.4
West North Central. .	55.6	67.4	60.8	61.2	62.1	58.3
South Atlantic.	58.0	61.4	62.3	63.4	61.7	56.7
East South Central	61.8	65.1	64.6	63.8	63.0	56.9
West South Central . .	60.5	67.5	63.4	65.9	62.6	59.9
Mountain.	54.1	69.6	56.4	67.2	60.5	60.7
Pacific.	52.8	70.1	55.1	68.7	58.8	59.7

* *Fifteenth Census, 1930, vol. II, Population, p. 948.*

this table that the proportion of married females is largest in the rural farm classification and next largest in the rural non-farm population. In the case of the males the picture is not quite so clear, because of a difference in the sex ratios of the different census divisions. For example, in the Western divisions there is likely to be a larger percentage of young men than of young women, and occupations other than farming are found in the country, with the result that the proportion of married men is less in the farm classifications than in the urban.

According to the census more people in every age group above 15 years marry in rural than in urban society. The country simply does not serve as a hospitable place for single persons, especially for unmarried girls and women. *Family* is the law of the *land*. For the boys and men, the figures are not quite so conclusive. For example, in the ages 15 to 24, when taken separately, the percentage married is not noticeably higher for rural than for urban. This is because the country has a relatively larger number of males in the 15-to-19-year group and the marriage rate is, of course, lower for these ages; their inclusion consequently tends to pull down the rate for the larger age group.

It is quite likely that the rural population is sharing in the trend pointed out for the country as a whole; that is, between 1890 and 1920 the proportion of those married, both males and females, in the age groups 15 to 24 years, increased steadily, but in the decade 1920 to 1930 this trend was checked.¹ Marriages are being postponed. More farm young people are remaining at home because the depression closed off other employment opportunities. These are important considerations in the matter of natural rates of population increase which are discussed later in the chapter.

The family group once formed, is less likely to be broken in rural than in urban areas, or, if it is broken, it is more likely to be reformed or else the remaining members will migrate.

¹ Ogburn, W. F., *Recent Social Trends*, chap. XIII, p. 680. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1933.

Studies of local communities suggest that the near-by villages or small towns may become the haven for such separate family members, especially if the group has been broken through the death of the father. Divorcees, especially women, seek opportunities in cities.

Broken family groups are found twice as frequently in the city as in the country. In large metropolitan areas 19.0 per cent of the homes were broken in 1930; in villages the figure was 14.7 per cent, while in country areas it was only 8.1 per cent.¹ Although death rates have fallen, increased divorce rates have completely offset their effect as far as the family group is concerned. But this also works in favor of the rural family in 1930, since it is reported from a sample study that one out of every ten homes was broken by separation or divorce. In Chicago it was one in every seven or eight, while in the rural territory surrounding the city, the rate was but one in twenty-three, despite the fact that divorce is increasing in rural areas. Families with children are less likely to be broken by divorce, and this, too, has peculiar significance for rural society, as will appear shortly.

As is stated elsewhere, the selective factor of migration has much to do with the proportionate number of families. City conditions and opportunities attract certain kinds of people, which is another way of saying that country life is unfavorable to some persons. Migration from the farm, for example, begins a little earlier and is more general, since daughters leave home more frequently than do sons. Likewise, children of tenant families and of owner families with the lower incomes are more likely to leave.² This was the situation prior to 1930. Reports of subsequent population movements or lack of movement, however, make it quite evident that the age distribution in the farm population has shifted somewhat toward the lower levels. Rural youth has not found its age-old outlet in city employment. Rural young people in cities

¹ Ogburn, *op. cit.*, p. 690.

² Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 13. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1933.

have sought refuge from disillusionments, all of which suggests more families and more children in the country.

Children, the distinguishing characteristic. Discussions of family occupation and distribution lead to questions of family composition. Children are the most significant feature of rural families; in fact, they are the most distinguishing thing about rural society itself. The country produces children; the city consumes them. This is one of the fundamentals in rural-urban relationships.

Size of family is more important than size of household, and will therefore be considered at this point.¹ A comparison of areas of residence and of changes by decades was tabulated from census materials for "Recent Social Trends" because the census reports published prior to 1930 did not give size of the family, but only the size of the household.² The data are for native whites of native parents, selected from four Middle Western States in the Great Lakes region. For the farming areas the number of persons in the unbroken family increased in average size from 4.2 in 1900 and 4.2 in 1920 to 4.3 in 1930. For 1930 the census reports the number of persons per family as being 3.9 for cities, 4.0 for rural non-farm areas, and 4.5 for farms.

The significant comparison is between families in small towns of somewhat less than 5000 population and families in cities. For the towns the figures for the three periods, 1900, 1920, and 1930, were 3.8, 3.7, and 3.7, respectively. For city centers of about 100,000 population, the figures were 3.6, 3.5, and 3.4. For Chicago, as representing a metropolitan center, the figures for the three years were 3.2, 3.1, and 2.8, indicating a decrease of 11 per cent during the 30 years, and 9 per cent during the last decade, 1920 to 1930. The farm families showed an increase of 3 per cent, while for the small towns there was a decrease of 3 per cent for the whole period. To express it in slightly different terms, if the size of the farm family is rep-

¹ Changes in size of households and in what is defined as "persons per family" can be secured directly from published census reports. Comparisons with the figures for changes in size of families would make a good supplementary discussion project.

² Ogburn, *op. cit.*, p. 681.

resented by 100 in 1930, the size of families in the small towns would be represented by 86, those in city centers by 79, and those in the metropolitan center by 66. These are significant differences.

When analyzed according to the various occupation groups, similar trends are seen. Families of farm owners decreased 1 per cent in size in the thirty years, 1900 to 1930, while those of farm renters increased 5 per cent, and those of farm laborers, 13 per cent. By further refinement in analysis it was shown, when families with wives of the same age groups, 35 to 39 years, were compared, that the farm-owner families declined somewhat in size, but farm-laborer families did not. In contrast, the greatest decline in size was found among families in the professional group, the decline being 10 per cent. In the proprietary group, the decline was 6 per cent; in the clerical group, 5 per cent; in the skilled and semi-skilled, 3 per cent, and in the unskilled, 1 per cent, the same as in the farm-owner group. This points to but one conclusion — the continued presence of children in rural families, and more especially in farm families.

One of the most telling ways to locate the child, in various types of families for which comparisons are desired, is by the use of what is known as a "fertility ratio." Fertility means fruitfulness or fecundity, and the ratio is calculated simply by expressing the number of children of a certain age in terms of 1000 women of child-bearing age, 15 to 44 years. For present purposes this is a more useful device than attempting to make comparisons through birth rates and death rates. Births and deaths may be recorded as urban, since hospitals are more frequently found there, but the people in question may actually be farm or village people. The number of children in the farm families is seen in Table 2 (page 30), where a comparison

**Note to Figure 1:*

The much smaller number of children under 5 years old per thousand women 15 to 44 years of age in the cities than in the country, and especially on the farm, is shown by the map to be almost universal. It will be noted also that in only one state, Utah, are there enough children in cities of 100,000 population and over to maintain a stationary population, and that all of the large cities average over 20 per cent deficit. In the farm population, on the other hand, there is still almost 50 per cent surplus. The ratio of children to women 15 to 44 years of age is notably high in the rural population of the South and of the Rocky Mountain States.

Source: Baker, O. E., "Rural-Urban Migration and the National Welfare," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 59-126. 1933.

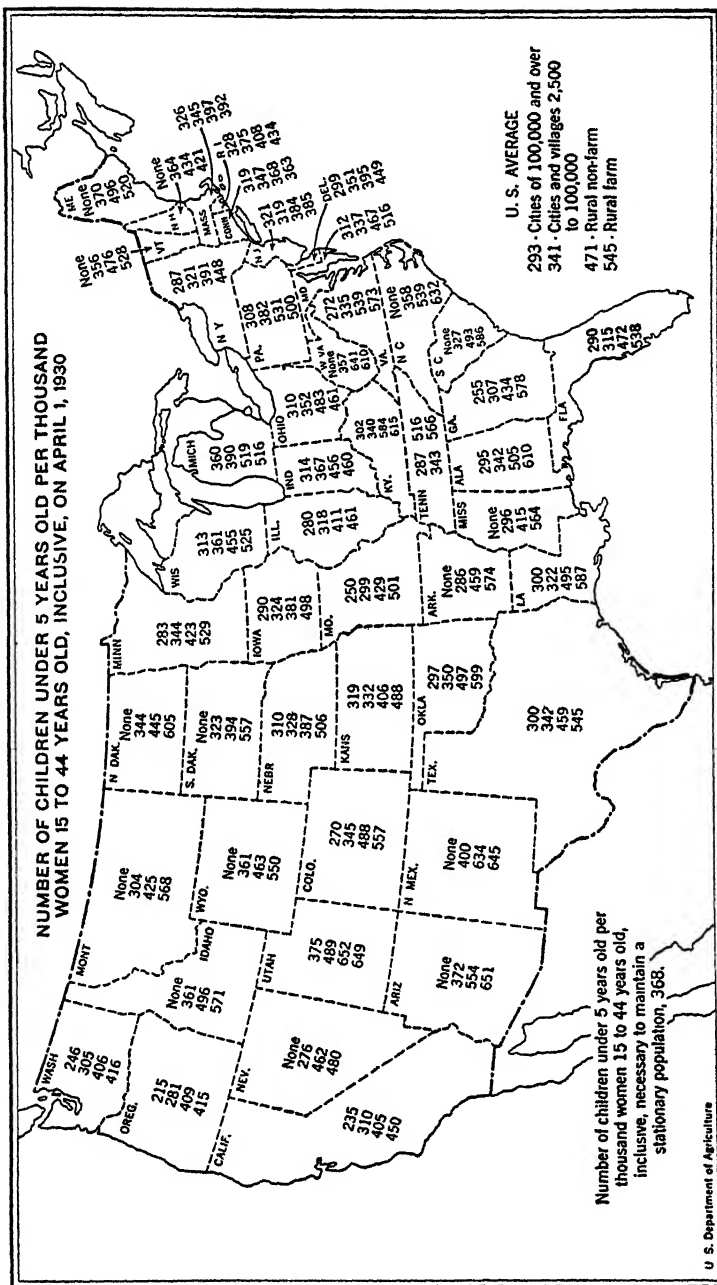


Fig. 1 (see *Note at foot of page 28).

TABLE 2. FERTILITY RATIO OF THE RURAL FARM POPULATION COMPARED WITH 177 AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES AND 38 MEDIUM-SIZED CITIES, BY REGIONS FOR 1920 AND 1930 *

Ratio of children under 10 years of age to women 20 to 44 years

Regions	1920			1930		
	U.S. Total Rural Farm	177 Agr'l Villages	38 Med. Cities	U.S. Total Rural Farm	177 Agr'l Villages	38 Med. Cities
Middle Atlantic....	129.6	84.5	80.2	139.5	88.4	79.7
South.....	179.7	107.0	79.0	169.5	99.7	75.9
Middle West.....	147.6	97.3	80.2	140.9	94.3	78.1
Far West.....	155.5	105.9	79.3	146.6	98.4	73.4

* Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

of all rural farm population is made with 177 agricultural villages and with 38 medium-sized cities, ranging in population from 20,000 to 105,000.

Greater detail is given in the map (Figure 1), where rural farm and non-farm ratios are compared with two classes of cities by states for the year 1930. Children are found almost universally in larger proportions in the rural, especially the farm, than in the urban population. Only in the state of Utah are there enough children in cities of 100,000 population to maintain a stationary population. For all the larger cities there is an average deficit of over 20 per cent. In the farm population there is, on the other hand, a surplus of almost 50 per cent. Between 1920 and 1930 there was a general decline in this ratio of children. It was greatest in Northern cities, the average decline for all cities in the 100,000 population class being 19 per cent, while in rural population it was only 11 per cent. This leaves the ratio for the farm population about twice as high as for the urban.

Many implications and problems, too, come to mind as the number of children in rural families is considered. It is significant to find the villages taking their usual place between the farm and the city groups, and to discover that growing villages have a higher ratio of children than do those of declining popula-

tion. Then, there are questions of providing for the education and the health of this greater proportion of farm and village children; there are problems of maternal care and possible hospitalization; there are queries respecting child labor, since agriculture is an occupation in which children live and work during their schooling period. It may be considered as excellent apprenticeship experience or it may be turned to exploitation, both for those who would stay in the occupation as well as for those who wish to leave it. Some of these questions will be the basis of later discussion involving schools, health, and recreational agencies, and concerning town-country or rural-urban relationships. The rural family must be considered the "nation's seed bed" for the replenishment of its population. Its care and nurture are questions of general concern.

Closer social organization. Composition of the family group relationships has an important bearing upon its social organization. First, there is an increasing diversity in the physical

TABLE 3. THE DISTRIBUTION PER THOUSAND OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FAMILIES IN CHICAGO AND ON FARMS, 1930*

Where the wife is under 45 years of age — and the husband when listed without a wife is under 50 years — in a sample of native whites of native parents in the East North Central States.

Type of Family	Farms	Metropolis
Husband and wife only.	163	398
Husband, wife and 1 child.	205	229
Husband, wife and 2 children.	202	122
Husband, wife and 3 children.	135	42
Husband, wife and 4 children or more.	214	19
Husband only.	25	63
Husband and 1 child.	6	5
Husband and 2 children.	5	2
Husband and 3 children or more.	5	1
Wife only.	14	72
Wife and 1 child.	12	31
Wife and 2 children.	6	11
Wife and 3 children or more.	8	5
Total of all types of family.	1000	1000

* Ogburn, *op. cit.*, p. 684. Original schedules of the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

structure of families and a distinctive difference between those of the farm and those of the large city as Table 3 (page 31) fully demonstrates.

Two and one half times as many unbroken farm families have children as do those in the metropolis. In the farm group 35 per cent of the husbands and wives living together have more than two children, in the large city, only 6 per cent. When taken together there are about three and a half times fewer husbands living alone and wives living alone on the farms than in the metropolitan center. The family situations for towns and for cities of about 100,000 population fall between the extremes represented in the table. The family type with husband, wife, and four or more children presents a striking contrast to the 19 per thousand in the metropolis classification and 214 for the farms. For the nation as a whole, only 2.7 per cent of city families have four or more children under ten years of age compared with 4.8 per cent of rural non-farm families and 7.7 per cent of the rural farm families. The presence of children, of course, conditions the social life of the rural family.

Personal relationships, however, are more indicative of the family organization than is its composition. There does appear to be a characteristic solidarity and a cohesion in the rural family. Interesting illustrations are found in the family case stories written by college students to which reference has been made. Three brief paragraphs will be quoted:

I have seen a great change in the conveniences available on our farm. When I first remember there were absolutely none. Gradually, one after another has been added. The house and other farm buildings are lighted with a Delco plant; there is the electric iron, electric washer, and power for pumping water, sawing wood, etc. I remember my mother saying when the lighting system was put in, "This is one of the happy days of my life. No more caring for lamps." The house is still heated with stoves and has no running water system. There is a telephone and refrigerator. The plan was to remodel the house and add the necessities then to make changing unnecessary. This depression has made a change of plans necessary.

When I look back now, I am sure she, mother, was overburdened. I think she was so busy caring for the physical needs of her children, that she did not have time to enjoy them. Much of her care of the younger children fell to me, since I was the oldest and a girl. Even yet I feel a deep responsibility for the other children, and find myself eternally planning and deciding for them, when there is no need and they would many times prefer that I did not.

Father had the greater say-so. He did not consider mother his inferior. She belonged in the house and he over the place in general. He didn't consider her his equal in some cases for the reason that he did transact most of the business. Furthermore, mother wasn't interested in details. Mutually, they both decided to make things go, and they did go. Mother did not feel inferior to father and she never felt that he expected her to feel so. She knew that he knew what he wanted and both were interested in making things go. So they worked together. Even with all the drudgery they enjoyed working together and going places together.

Rural family has distinctive life cycle. The family group must not be considered as a static thing. A family made up of a wife, husband, and one or two children, does not necessarily stay just that way. Family groups are formed of two original members; children are born and grow up; some leave temporarily, some permanently, so that sometimes the group is reduced to its original two members. More concisely stated, families go through life cycles. They experience periods of formation, development, augmentation, and decline. In rural families the cycle ordinarily requires about twenty-five years. Each period entails different requirements, diverse relationships, and to some extent, varying characteristics.

In order to secure a better understanding of some of the differences in family relationships in the various periods of development, 267 farm families were chosen for special study from a total of 900 families, representing all of the major farming type areas of a Mid-Western State.² The periods or stages

² Kirkpatrick, Tough, Cowles, *The Life Cycles of the Farm Family in Relation to Its Standards of Living*, Research Bulletin 121, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, September, 1934.

of development were defined primarily in terms of school ages of the children. Four stages were considered: the pre-school, with children under 6 years of age; grade-school, with children 6 to 13 years; high-school, with children 14 to 18 years; and the all-adult, with children 19 or more years of age.

For the majority of all farm families, the pre-child period was found to be short, since the family usually increased in size within the first or second year. The post-child period is reached after all the children have left home and the family is again composed of the operator and homemaker. Most farm families of the post-child period, however, were found to contain at least one grown son or daughter who was helping with the farm or home work. Such families were thus classed in the all-adult group. The average size of family increased from 4.1 persons in the pre-school stage to 5.1 persons in the high-school age and returned again to 4.1 persons in the all-adult.

(1) *The pre-school family* is a young family in a double sense: it has existed a relatively short period of time, and usually its operator and homemaker are between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age. Pre-school families, in contrast to those in other stages of development, spend more time in reading and listening to the radio, and they are usually more interested in community affairs.

Recently a large proportion of farm families has been unable to meet interest and tax payments, and the pre-school families are no exception. They are likely to have more medical expenses because of children's illnesses than have other families. One of the most significant long-time effects of the present depression is the fact that the health needs of this group of families are receiving inadequate attention. This problem is vital to the pre-school homemaker and to her mind far exceeds unpaid interest or delinquent taxes in importance.

(2) *The grade-school family* is similar in many respects to the pre-school family, although, of course, the operator and homemaker are older. It, too, is making sacrifices to climb the "agricultural ladder," is finding it difficult to meet interest and

tax payments, and has relatively high expenditures for medical care.

In talking about plans for the future, homemakers and operators in this stage of development are primarily concerned with education for the children. The family will have to make provision for these future educational needs at the sacrifice of many other things including even immediate housing improvements, as was indicated in a conversation with Mrs. Roth, who is the mother of children in grade school. Her ambition for her two children is a high-school education. In addition, she wishes her son to go to college to learn to be a "real farmer." She stated that neither Mr. Roth nor she went to high school, but "no matter what happens, the children are going because they need it and must have it." This story is a good illustration of the projection upon the children of the unfulfilled educational desires of the parents. Such projection is more likely to be characteristic of the family with younger children.

(3) *The high-school family* presents a decided contrast to the two earlier stages. In this period the family is larger than at any other stage, reaching its maximum size of 5.1 persons and, obviously, children or adolescents constitute three fifths of this family. In this group the labor of the boys and girls is a substitute for hired help. Wants in the high-school stage are many and varied. They make themselves felt in expenditures for clothing, and advancement goods and services for the children. In rural areas it is necessary for the children to go to the neighboring village high school and this involves either expenditures for transportation or for board and room. In addition, expenses for advancement goods take the form of relatively high outlays for reading materials, for organization dues, and for recreation. Hours spent in reading and listening to radio programs at home drop for this group as compared with the others.

Since the amount of cash available for family living in this group is not necessarily more than that at the other three stages of family development, the relatively large amounts spent for clothing and advancement must result in curtailment

of expenditures for other goods and services. This reduction occurs in such items as furnishings, household operation, maintenance of health, and insurance.

(4) *The all-adult family* has greater expenditures for family living than any other group. This indicates not only that the wants in this group are greater and more diverse than those at the other stages of development, but also a greater tendency to gratify them. Relatively large expenditures are made by families in this stage for clothing, furnishings, schooling, reading matter, church support, recreation, and personal goods.

Often the all-adult stage of development is a period when anticipated wants on the part of the parents for the children are fulfilled, at least in part. The children are educated, have positions, have been married and very often, are beginning another family cycle. The child who has fulfilled the family's desires is a source of satisfaction to his parents.

Changing family relationships. The early American rural family was said to be patriarchal in organization. It was argued that this made for continuity and a kind of stability. Many things have happened, since those pioneer days, to challenge paternal domination and to raise new problems, and in order to solve them, individual families and groups of families have had to make readjustments, often of a rather thoroughgoing character. There has been a much greater emphasis upon education for rural women. Women have received their franchise and they are participating in the social, educational, and agricultural activities of their communities. A recent survey of local rural organization leaders and officers indicates that women make up about 50 per cent of the group, and that their education measured in years of schooling is about two years in advance of the men.

It is significant that leaders in the agricultural colleges charged with the duty of assisting farmers in their farm management and economic problems have recently concluded that "the wife's co-operation is a very important consideration." Even their measuring stick of profits or earnings points to the importance of the wife to the farm enterprise. They report

that, since no exact measure of the wife's co-operation was possible, the field men and others acquainted with the families in question chose for purposes of their survey 17 in which the best co-operation was evident, and 17 in which there seemed to be the least. The first group had average labor earnings of \$1757, and the latter, \$842. The average for the entire group of farms studied was \$1038. The difference in dollars may seem too great, but it is significant that the farm operators themselves ranked "co-operation of wives" second in a list of fifteen factors which they regarded as most important in their success.¹ It is modern evidence of the close relationship of family and farm. Farm management has been stressed and home management has been emphasized, but over both and encompassing the two, is family management. Farming is a family affair.

Many questions may arise as the family attempts to adjust itself and its members to changing demands of the times. As Lawrence Frank pointed out in a conference discussing rural family relations:

You might find that in so far as the adult members of the family have grown up in a given environment, they represent certain cultural traditions, whether in beliefs, ideas, or the use of various tools and techniques in agriculture and home economics, and are endeavoring to live up to certain standards of behavior or performance in each of these fields. That is, they may be trying to live according to the precepts of their church; the farmer may be trying to live up to what is expected of a self-respecting farmer; his wife, to maintain such a household or standard of living as her economic, social, and political position demands. But in addition, these adults are also endeavoring to inculcate in their children certain standards of conformity to these cultural patterns, and frequently these conflict with the standards to which the children wish to conform and then you have a discrepancy which may give a clue to some of the difficulties the family is facing. How do these changes in standards come about?

You may find that in a rural culture which was fairly well integrated at one time, something has happened to bring about these discrepancies and difficulties. It may be that progress has been

¹ Wilcox, Boss, Pond, *Relation of Variations in the Human Factor to Financial Returns in Farming*, Bul. 288, University of Minnesota, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1932.

made in one direction through transportation or education, and not in another; or that there has been a general lag in the views, particularly of the adult members of the community. To the problem of finding out how the original changes took place, we might add that of determining how to even up these advances. The family may be living in 1929 with regard to its transportation; it may be living in 1900 in regard to some other phases of living; and in 1860 in something else. How do they get ahead or catch up in some particular activity, function, or technique, and keep abreast of the times, and what holds them back in others? ¹

It is in such terms that family relationships need to be considered. These relationships are vital to the members of the family group for, as Professor Burgess has emphasized repeatedly, "the family is a unity of interacting personalities. It is a living, changing, growing thing." ² There are husband-wife relationships, parent-child relationships, and child-child relationships; all are important and all are changing. A peculiar rôle of the family is that of helping to work out some semblance of consensus and some harmony of such relationships.

One conclusion concerning urban families is that their educational and economic functions are being passed to the school and other institutions. The outstanding remaining function is said to be that of personality development, providing for mutual adjustments among family members and adaptation of members to the outside world. ³ Such a conclusion, especially regarding economic functions, can hardly be said to characterize farm families. Tendencies since 1929 seem to point in the other direction. The older conception of the family and its household as more self-contained and self-sustained, is again in vogue under the urge of dire necessity. Whether or not it is an indication of future tendencies, is difficult to say. The farm family, however, did not share very fully in the economic changes overtaking the urban family.

¹ *Proceedings, Conference on Rural Family Relations*. Merrill-Palmer School, Detroit, Mich., March, 1929.

² Burgess, Ernest W., University of Chicago. Article in *The Family*, March, 1926.

³ Ogburn, *op. cit.*, p. 661.

In the matter of the woman's household duties, for example, the per cent of time spent in preparing meals and washing dishes in city homes is 33 per cent as compared with 43 per cent in farm homes. Housecleaning was about the same for both, but in 70 per cent of the farm families all the washing was done at home, as compared with 23 per cent for the urban family. Mending and sewing required 6 per cent of the time in city households and 9 per cent in those on the farm.¹ The village family takes its place as usual between farm and urban families, although in some of the economic functions it apparently resembles the urban family more closely.

The first great family function of preserving and protecting life through all the multiplicities of homemaking, housekeeping, and family living, though modified on many fronts as the chapter dealing with the social institution of the home and its standards of living will show, remains a dominant characteristic of the rural family.

A second great function is that of perpetuating the race and caring for the sex life. The rural family has certainly distinguished itself in the first part of this function, as the earlier section on children has shown. No adequate basis for comment on the second part exists. Comparative studies on divorce may be of some little value, but marital felicity goes much deeper than that. The rural family does continue to have much greater stability, as has been shown. Field studies indicate rather clearly, however, that domestic tranquillity is not universal even in the country. Studies are needed to show trends and point ways and means for attaining greater "success in marriage."

A third great function, or better, a group of functions, has to do with personality, cultural, and affectional relationships. Members of a family need some sense of security, of status, of group solidarity, and quite as important, they need to cultivate facility in relating themselves to other groups: neighborhoods, communities, and society itself. It is difficult to consider

¹ Kneeland, Hildegard, "Woman's Economic Contribution to the Home," *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May, 1929, vol. cxliii, p. 33.

functions unless some idea of goal or direction is introduced. What values need fostering in rural life and what functions or services may the family render? The obvious answer is children. The White House Conference pointed out, in adapting the Children's Charter, that every side of child life affects the welfare of society itself. The committee on Recent Social Trends concludes that the future stability of the family will depend more and more on the strength of the affectional bonds. The rural family is distinguished by children. Children are prime objects of affection. Thus, the circle of argument would seem complete.

Much has been done for rural people in the way of research and education respecting plant and animal production, household efficiency, and farm management. May not the future trend lie in the direction of facing issues of marriage and family relationships? Helpful suggestions are needed for rural young people in such ventures. That there is need for more and better opportunities for rural children is brought out rather strikingly in the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection to which reference has been made. A few conclusions and one interpretation will be quoted. Three striking conclusions were as follows:

Not more than a dozen rural counties have what would be considered as a possibly decent type of health machinery such as exists in every large city.

There are wide areas — largely rural sections — which are a veritable "No Man's Land" — areas where handicapped children in desperate need of help grow up and die without aid.

Agriculture in several respects presents the most serious of all child labor problems.

Professor Fannie W. Dunn of Teachers College, Columbia University, furnishes an interpretation of one report. She says:

One of the few findings at variance with common knowledge or general opinion was that of the Committee on the Family and Parent Education, which on the basis of an investigation of 8000 children, rural and urban, discovered poorer adjustment as to

family relations in the case of the rural child than in that of the urban child.¹

Whether experiences of the depression have strengthened or weakened the ties of the rural family, it is difficult to say without definite studies. Those who have worked with urban families seem to agree that "well-organized" families tend to remain well organized or even become stronger, while the break-up of poorly organized families was hastened.

An opportunity and a challenge, therefore, faces rural society in this, its first important social group — the family. Its early traditions, its land anchorage, and its most recent tendencies point to this opportunity. More family units and greater solidarity are not in themselves enough. These may even result in handicaps and suppressions to the child. Surely devoted and intelligent rural people can do much to populate rural society with more happy homes.

THE GREAT FAMILY IN RURAL SOCIETY

Individual rural families and more especially farm families, live in a degree of physical isolation. This need not and more frequently does not mean social isolation. As personalities are the basis of the family group, so individual families are closely knit by threads of kinship and marriage with other families. A whole philosophy or analogy of the family has been built up about the idea of "trunk" and "branches." It is to the effect that an individual family sends out branches when its children marry and in turn have their own offspring. The whole network of relationship is known as the "family tree." This interesting line of thought cannot be followed here, but the point for emphasis is that families are not family units by themselves; they cannot be considered complete integers. On the contrary, they are part and parcel of a larger kinship organization — the great family. This is one of the significant legacies of the early family and one of the important characteristics of the modern rural family.

W. I. Thomas and his collaborator, Florian Znaniecki, in

¹ Folsom, Joseph, "Book Reviews," *American Sociological Review*, June, 1939.

their study of the Polish peasant in America, found that this larger family group — the great family — “had an integrity and a self-sufficiency providing the materials out of which personalities and careers of its members were built.”¹ “We found,” they said, “that land hunger and status were the drive within this group, and accounted for the intensity with which pursuits were directed and carried on. That is to say, the individual was predetermined by the habits of this group.” No one familiar with rural society can doubt the importance and the influence of this larger group of relatives by blood or law, even to the third and fourth generations. The great family is the custodian of the culture, the traditions, and the ideals of its members.

One simple and practical illustration of the implications of this principle was pointed out by Dr. Galpin in 1918, when he studied the occupancy of 500 farms in one locality over the preceding ten years.² Almost 50 per cent of the 125 rented farms were occupied by tenants who were related to the owners. Over 30 per cent of the transfers in titles during that period were from fathers to sons. “It is worth noticing as a piece of rural sagacity in the climb up the ‘agricultural ladder’ that sons who purchased farms, kept close to the father as advisor or landlord and presumably received the father’s material backing when it came to purchase.”

Neither the small family nor the great family, however, is adequate for the needs of personalities in modern times. Other contacts and other intimacies are needed. This leads to a further exploration of the group organization of rural society.

¹ *Proceedings, Conference on Family Relations*, Merrill-Palmer School, Detroit, Mich., December, 1928; Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant*, Knopf, New York, 1927.

² Galpin, C. J., *Farm Tenancy*, Research Bulletin 44, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, 1919.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. List and describe briefly five distinctive characteristics of the farm family as compared first with the village family and second with the urban family.
2. Compare and contrast the manner of early farm family settlement in New England, in the Old South, in the Middle West, and in the Far West.
3. Does a greater proportion of rural or city people marry? Which marries younger? Which has more children per family? Give your explanations.
4. How does the life cycle of farm families differ from that of village or city families?
5. How do you account for the finding by the Committee of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, to the effect that the rural children studied were less well adjusted to their families than the city children which were studied?
6. Give the best example you know of a "great family." What influences does it exert upon individual families and upon the personalities of younger members?

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The rural and urban family compared.

CHAPTER III

COUNTRY NEIGHBORHOODS

OUT beyond the farm family lies the country neighborhood. The question, "What is the name of the neighborhood in which you live?" often brings an answer such as, Wheeler Prairie, Spring Valley, Pierceville, or Pumpkin Hollow, which is just as definite and full of meaning as the family name. Neighborhoods are localities where country people live; they are groups of neighbor families whose members know each other by their first names. Frequently these neighbors are relatives; usually they are associated in school, church, or social activities.

In stricter phraseology, a neighborhood is that first group outside the family which has social significance, and which has some sense of local unity. It is conditioned both geographically and psychologically. It is an area of local association and it is a group of primary, personal, or face-to-face contacts. In rural society propinquity continues to make a difference and as elsewhere, primary groups are very important to the lives of individuals. It was Charles H. Cooley who gave this primary group concept its puissance and its clarity so that it is sure to be useful for a long time in studying human society.¹ By primary groups he meant those groups which are personal, intimate, or face-to-face in character. They are primary because they are fundamental in forming the social nature and the ideals of the individual. In fact, Professor Cooley said that personality cannot exist without such association or fellowship. Human nature is but a trait of primary groups, he insisted. Among the more important phases of this kind of group life, he enumerated the family, the neighborhood, and the play group. It is the country neighborhood to which attention will be given in this chapter.

¹ Cooley, Charles H., *Social Organization*, chap. III. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.

The neighborhood has played its part from the time when country people first formed themselves into more or less permanent settlements and established themselves on some specific piece of land. In the European rural society which formed the cultural background of the early American settlers, the agricultural village was the center for settlement and group activity. In Russia it was the mir; in Scandinavian countries, it was the family estate; in Norman England, the manor. Familism was characteristic of these types of rural social organization quite as much as of the separated farm system which developed later in this country.

EARLY NEIGHBORHOOD SETTLEMENTS

In New England the village form of local social economy was continued. Residences were clustered around "the common." At the center were the squares for church, school, and town hall. Barns and sheds were on the home lot with the house. The tillable lands were adjoining, but extending back into the open, often in rather narrow strips. Beyond lay the meadow land and frequently the wood lots.² In many ways the New England town with its town meeting and village-centered social life was the primary group. Its influence is widespread, for many of its social institutions and ideals were carried westward, almost "bodily" by the settlers, although for many reasons the centralized village pattern was not transplanted. Coupling it with the powerful religious concept of the four-square "City of Zion," the Mormons, however, took it west and made it their dominant type of settlement and social organization.

In the South the plantation was to all intents and purposes the primary locality group. Its origins can be traced more or less directly to the old English manor of lords and country gentlemen. The plantation plan lent itself to large-scale, single-crop farming, to a slavery system of labor, and subse-

² For full description, see MacLear, Anne B., *Early New England Towns*, Columbia University Studies in Economics, History, and Public Law, vol. 29, no. 1.

quently, to tenants and croppers.¹ Both the social and the economic life of the area were organized about the plantation and carried on as a unit enterprise. It might range in size from six or eight families to more than a hundred. There were the plantation buildings, the commissary, often the school, the large dwelling house, and the coterie of small cottages and cabins. The planter and his family were, of course, the dominant figures in the group and represented the aristocracy of Southern society.

In the Middle West and Far West the separate-farm, neighborhood settlement was most common. Individual farms were settled by families who went out to get land and to seek their fortunes. They settled in groups on adjoining farms and were bound together by such ties as kinship, common nationality, the same education, social, or religious purposes. When the neighborhood was composed largely of a kinship group or of the great family as described in the preceding chapter, a very closely knit organization was formed. Topography and crop or forest cover were also important. Some of the earlier settlers sought the "oak openings," or moved directly into the timber so that they might have building material and fuel. They looked for springs or streams to supply water for themselves and their livestock. Mutual aid, exchange of work, building bees, social affairs, schools, and churches soon became the organized ways of these groups. If adjoining settlements were made by those of different cultural backgrounds, or nationality, and unlike purposes, group lines were drawn a little closer. School district boundaries were gerrymandered so as to include only the in-group. Only the arbitrary township lines laid off by the surveyor and carefully executed on the checker-board pattern would not yield to the social or group design. Herein may lie at least some of the reasons for the impotency of local government organized on the township basis.

Country neighborhood settlement and social organization

¹ Brennan, C. O., *Relation of Land Tenure to Plantation Organization*. United States Department of Agriculture, Bulletin 1269.

went on quite independently and often prior to small-town settlement. The latter sprang up to render certain special types of services which the neighborhood could not organize for itself, such as transportation, banking, merchandising, and certain forms of manufacturing. Villages or towns were often populated by a more heterogeneous group, unrelated in blood or ideal to those of the country neighborhood. These differences became the basis for some of the lack of understanding between town and country, and even for conflicts which developed a little later, when mutual relationships became more important and when the newer transportation and communication systems tied town and country more closely together. Unlike the New England plan, Mid-Western and Western villages were incorporated as municipalities, thus withdrawing from the township unit and leaving the country group to its own plans.

In the pioneer fringes neighborhood settlement continues ever westward and northward. C. A. Dawson describes the process in the Peace River district of Alberta and British Columbia.² He tells about the individual settlements of Fairview and Grande View; he describes how they preceded the railroad; how they set up one-room schools, with a six-month term; how whole families go to all-night dances, putting the small children to sleep in a space set aside for the purpose, and how informality and kindliness prevail. These two settlements are simply examples of the old neighborhood primary group formation process. Dawson goes on to point out that the next stage is soon reached when there is a greater diffusion of culture, when urban influences are felt, and when the later settlers demand greater accessibility to the town with its stores, clubs, theaters, hotels, and athletic teams. With a division of interests there is a realignment in primary group organization and the beginning of secondary forms of contact. Very similar situations were found in Beaverhead County, Montana, and in Union County, New Mexico, when they were studied in 1920.

² Dawson, C. A., *Pioneer Settlement*, chap. 6. American Geographical Society, New York, 1932.

NEIGHBORHOODS PERSIST

One of the most important discoveries made in the various re-studies of rural localities is the persistence of country neighborhoods. Many persons have predicted that this form of local group organization was a thing of the past because of the increased facilities for communication and travel, the great mobility of both country and city people, and the loosening of kinship and nationality ties. Of course, changes were found in numbers as well as in the character of these groups as the next section of the chapter will show. By 1936, for example, the time of the third study of agricultural village communities, there had been quite a heavy mortality. The depression brought discouragement which could not be overcome, at least for a time; therefore, many neighborhoods ceased all forms of activity. Some might be considered dormant, to be called into action again by some leader or by some local circumstance, while others gave no evidence of life.

On the other hand, the economic difficulties and social insecurity of the period made some groups more determined to satisfy some of their needs in their home locality. They were quickened into greater activity as the difficulties in earning a living increased. They bound themselves together more firmly by mutual aid; they joined more frequently in home talent efforts such as music, drama, recreation, or group discussion.

Many country groups which do persist are now more a result of deliberate choice, of kindred interests, and of organized activities than they are of mere locality or proximity of residence or of tradition. Yet it must be stressed that locality and proximity do continue to play important parts in those forms of local association which are primary or face-to-face in character.

Extent of persistence. The number of neighborhoods in 140 communities made up of small-town or village and open-country areas declined from 513 to 429 between 1924 and 1930, a decline of about 16 per cent. By 1936 only 286 could be classed as active, which was a decline of 34 per cent. However, 31 new groups were found and 17 which had not been considered active

in 1930 were clearly active in 1936. Six more were lost by reason of definition, since they were no longer within the confines of community boundaries. Therefore, the net number of neighborhoods within the communities studied was 328, a decline of 36 per cent since 1924 and of 23.5 per cent since 1930. There were variations from region to region. The net loss in the last period for the Middle West was 20.8 per cent; for the Middle Atlantic, 23.5 per cent; for the South, 26.6 per cent; and for the Far West, 31.6 per cent. In the Far West the per cent decline during the earlier period was only 4 per cent, but throughout the whole period from 1924 to 1936 it was 20.8 per cent which was the lowest for any region.

In the South during this interval various elements of change were more active than in other regions. Better roads were considered a factor in the majority of cases where neighborhoods had disappeared. The road-improvement program in the South was initiated later than in other sections and consequently its effects upon country neighborhoods were delayed; in other regions this element was effective in only one fifth of the cases. Adjustments had already been made, since any innovation necessitates group changes and considerable time is often required.

Intensive case restudies of special areas reveal much the same conditions with regard to the persistence of country neighborhoods. In Boone County, Missouri, for instance, a preliminary check showed that 40 of the original 59 neighborhoods located in 1924 were still in existence in 1931, while 15 new ones were in evidence. Continuation of informal social and neighboring contacts were frequently apparent in this county. In Otsego County, New York, the movement from neighborhood to the town-country community form of rural organization had proceeded farther than in many other sections, yet the restudy in 1931 showed that of the 22 neighborhoods described in 1921, 10 were still active, 5 were weaker, 6 had given up their activities, and 1 had been absorbed into the life of an expanding city. In Dane County, Wisconsin, neighborhood organization, which had grown up in early settlement days as a result of such

factors as topography, nationality, and religious organization, was strong when first studied in 1921. Sixty-three of the 95 neighborhoods formerly classed as active were still active in 1931. Seven groups located in 1921, but considered rather weak and inactive at that time, were clearly in the active ranks in 1931. Twenty-four new groups were found, possessing characteristics similar to those which had been persisting. The final number of "active" groups was, therefore, within one of the original total. Reasons for what may seem rather an unusual situation will be given consideration as the discussion proceeds.

The hamlet-centered neighborhood. A type of neighborhood which merits special attention is the one centered about a small residence cluster, usually not over 250 people and having one or more local institutions. This type of center is commonly known as a hamlet. In all of the areas studied this type of neighborhood was found among those classed as "new." Although population changes were not great in the interval between the studies, the relationships of these small centers to the surrounding country areas were different. In the earlier studies they had frequently been classed as centers for a village-country community, but in the interim they had slipped down into another classification. They could not possibly be considered the center for a town-country type of community group. They were usually to be found within the service areas of some larger center and to all practical purposes were similar to such open-country neighborhoods as were centered about one or two local institutions, such as school, church, or store.

In summary, then, the types of neighborhood that exhibit the greatest tendency toward persistence are: first, local groups characterized by visiting, informal sociability and various forms of organized social activity; second, locality groups integrated about one or more local institutions, groups whose continuity was not insured until such institutions were developed; third, the hamlet type which by reason of better educational systems or more modern service institutions has come to be a country neighborhood type of center rather than a town-country community center.

Characteristic activities. Activities, organizations, or local institutions are the things which hold together country neighborhoods more generally now than they did a decade ago. This is only natural, because in the earlier settlement days or during the first period of a neighborhood group's existence, effort was directed toward building up forms of common life which would persist. Many of the earlier settlers did not rest until their ideals had been embodied into a school district and a school-house, a church society and a church building, or a social organization and a constitution. They often built the school and the church with their own hands and presided over many of their functions in the absence of professional leadership.

Activities characteristic of neighborhoods, in the 140 community areas to which reference has been made, have changed very little during the periods of study. Among those activities which acted most forcefully as factors in holding country people together in neighborhood groups, the following may be listed, either singly or in various combinations: school, church, social or economic organizations, store, racial bands, and great family. Variations among the four geographic regions are frequent. For example, in the Far West, church neighborhoods were not found as frequently as elsewhere and racial groups were not as important in the settlement of this region as they were in the Middle West. On the other hand, in the Far West two thirds of the neighborhoods were characterized by combinations of school and some social or economic activity, by social or economic activity alone, or by school, church, and trade.

In the Middle West and South some forms of organization or society, such as an agricultural extension project, a mothers' club, or social activity, had grown to a place of greater importance in binding the group than the fact of living in close proximity. Often special activities were organized or special interests were appealed to in order to compensate for the decline of the simple neighboring tradition. Activities were often found together, some supplementary, others competitive. The Wisconsin county gives further evidence that activities are often found in combination, that is, neighborhood life is not

uni-centered, but moves about common or overlapping interests.

In this county the following combinations were found:

Combinations of Four	Number of Neighborhoods
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., 4-H club, county federation....	13
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., 4-H club, store.....	12
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., church, store.....	10
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., club, church.....	4

Combinations of Three	Number of Neighborhoods
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., 4-H club.....	32
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., county federation.....	24
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., store.....	23
Public school, church, store.....	19
Public school, mothers' club or P.T.A., church.....	18
Mothers' club or P.T.A., church, store.....	10

The combinations of activities in a neighborhood group suggest that there is a process of cumulation or a piling-up of the factors making for group solidarity. Such groups, then, are characterized not only by a single dimension of lateral or geographic extent, but also by a second dimension of depth or intensity.

Ranking factors which hold neighborhoods together. Another way of showing the relative importance of various influences at work in group continuity and the extent to which changes are taking place was the ranking of factors which tend to hold neighborhoods together. This was done in the same county study by combining the primary and secondary influences by giving a numerical value of one to the primary and the value of one half to the secondary factors. The table gives the result of this procedure.

The table probably gives as true a picture of this situation of neighborhoods as can be drawn in statistical terms. Personal judgment and experience in the field would be almost sure to rank the factors in that order for the year 1931. Educational purpose, conceived in broad terms, stands first. For those groups showing the greatest persistence, however, the influence of the church and religious purpose ranks first. Interestingly enough, the religious purpose ranks sixth in the column headed

"active in 1921 and inactive in 1931," which simply means that neighborhoods organized about the church did not fall into the "inactive" group. They held their places.

TABLE 4. RANKING OF FACTORS HOLDING NEIGHBORHOODS *

Factors	All Active in 1931			Active in Both 1921 and 1931		Considered First Time and Active Again in 1931. Rank for 1931	Active in 1921; Inactive in 1931. Rank for 1921
	Rank of Total	Open Country	Hamlet	Rank for 1921	Rank for 1931		
Educational purpose	1	1	4	2	2	1	1
Social purpose.	2	2	3	5	2	2	2
Religious purpose. . . .	3	3	2	1	1	4	6
Economic purpose. . . .	4	4	1	4	4	3	5
Nationality bonds. . . .	5	5	5	3	5	—	4
Topography.	—	—	—	6	—	—	3

* Kolb, J. H., *Trends in Country Neighborhoods*, Research Bulletin 120, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, November, 1933.

Social purpose comes into its own according to this method. In any attempt to weigh the various factors as objectively as possible, the social factor of necessity falls into a secondary classification, but in reality it is often the ingredient which actually makes the more obvious factor really potent. It is not so stable, not so completely institutionalized and permanent in influence as are certain others. For these reasons it holds second rank in the new group of neighborhoods and in that older group which could not classify as active in 1931.

Economic purpose stands fourth. For the hamlet neighborhoods it ranks first, and with those in the "new" classification it changes places with religious purpose because of the introduction of those hamlets formerly counted as trade or community centers.

The story of Rogers Hollow neighborhood. To give a clearer and more vivid picture of neighborhood activities and of how the various influences work together, a case story is given from the Otsego County study. Rogers Hollow is an open-country neighborhood in the west-central part of Unadilla Township. The activities of the neighborhood center around the schools, a Grange, and a Friends Church, the latter being probably the

most important in giving the neighborhood its identity. The neighborhood fair, which has been held each fall for the past eleven years, includes the school districts of Idumes and Unadilla Center on the north and the Meeker district on the south, in addition to the two school districts in Rogers Hollow. The Grange is stronger than it has been for several years. About five years ago interest in it declined to such an extent that the meetings were held at the homes of the members. Under the present leadership, however, interest has again revived. There are now 53 members meeting twice a month at the Grange hall with an average attendance of 25 to 30 people. In addition to the regular meetings, dances and parties are held in the hall about once a month.

The Friends Church is the center for most of the life of the neighborhood, due to the able leadership of the resident pastor. The church has slightly more than 100 members with an average attendance of about 50 persons at church and an enrollment of 40 to 45 people in the Sunday School. The membership is well organized, having two young people's societies, the Penn Helpers and the True Blues, each of which holds a regular monthly meeting; a Missionary Society which meets every month at the homes of the members, supplemented by an annual public meeting and entertainment in the community house; a Ladies' Aid Society, at present combined with the Home Bureau unit, which also meets regularly. There are also monthly church nights. The 4-H Club for boys and girls, directed by the minister, has about 22 members, and usually meets once in four weeks at the community house. In 1929, Rogers Hollow united with Rockdale, Guilford, and East Guilford, all of which are in Chenango County, in the formation of a larger parish, a movement which will undoubtedly strengthen all the churches of the area. Every child in the neighborhood is a member of the Sunday School and nearly every family is represented in either the church or Sunday School.

There is a young people's branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and a Loyal Temperance Legion for the school children. Both the Farm Bureau and Dairymen's

League have a local organization which holds about two meetings annually. As a result there is a social party or meeting of some kind every week in the year, and often two or three meetings in the same week. This is by far the most active neighborhood in the county and is an excellent example of what a country church with a resident pastor can contribute to the life of its people.

Westville, a hamlet neighborhood. Located in Cherry Creek Valley, it is halfway between Middlefield and Milford. At the center there are nineteen houses, a garage, a general store, two sawmills, a Grange hall, a grade school, and two churches, one a Baptist with a resident minister, and the other a Methodist, served by the minister at Milford. Milford, about four miles south, has the high school, and is the trading center except for drygoods and women's ready-to-wear, most of which are bought in Oneonta. The only organizations connected with the churches are the two Ladies' Aid Societies; neither church has a young people's organization. The average attendance at church services is about twenty people. The Home Bureau has a local organization with twelve members, but interest in the work is not very strong because most of the members belong to one of the Ladies' Aid Societies or to the Grange. The only organizations for the young people are the Boy Scout troop, with six members, organized by the minister, and the local 4-H Club with twenty-two members.

The Grange is probably the most important factor in the life of the neighborhood. It has 126 members and meets every two weeks in the Grange hall, with an average attendance of approximately fifty. It recently organized a degree team which has been instrumental in maintaining the interest of the younger members. During the winter social parties are held after the regular meetings and each member is allowed to bring one guest. The Grange membership area is somewhat larger than the immediate neighborhood, extending as far as Middlefield on the north and Milford on the south. Westville is the most active of the hamlet centers of the county and is a good example of that type of neighborhood.

The rôle of institutions. As is definitely shown in the cases of Rogers Hollow and Westville, established institutions are among the strongest forces holding neighborhood groups together. As has also been suggested, one of the early ambitions or objectives of many country groups was to establish a local school, church, or social organization. Once established, the institution has great power in keeping people together. It furnished common objectives. It is tangible evidence of group achievement. It is only natural, therefore, that in the earlier years neighborhood boundaries frequently determined the size of school districts, church parishes, and organization or trade areas, and in later years were themselves fixed by the radius of the institution's influence.

In this New York county where Rogers Hollow and Westville are located, it is quite evident that churches and Granges are typical of the older institutions in both open-country and hamlet neighborhoods. Organizations such as Home Bureau, social club, and 4-H Club, are most characteristic of the recent years.

Inter-family visiting and exchange-of-work patterns. Further evidence that farm families have a tendency to cluster together in neighborhoods for their essential living purposes is shown by a recent study of those primary group functions which include neighborly visiting, mutual aid in time of emergency, and exchange-of-work habits. Such primary culture patterns are limited in area and produce some of the most compact and cohesive neighborhoods to be found anywhere. The extent of such inter-family relations determines in many cases the degree of success that a family has in converting income into goods and services essential for living and thus for maintaining its independence and self-respect. These inter-family ties are often overlooked by agencies seeking to rehabilitate families which have succumbed to the economic and social pressure of the depression period.

Patterns can be drawn indicating the kind and extent of such family inter-dependence. They may be used as a measure of the second dimension of group intensity to which reference has

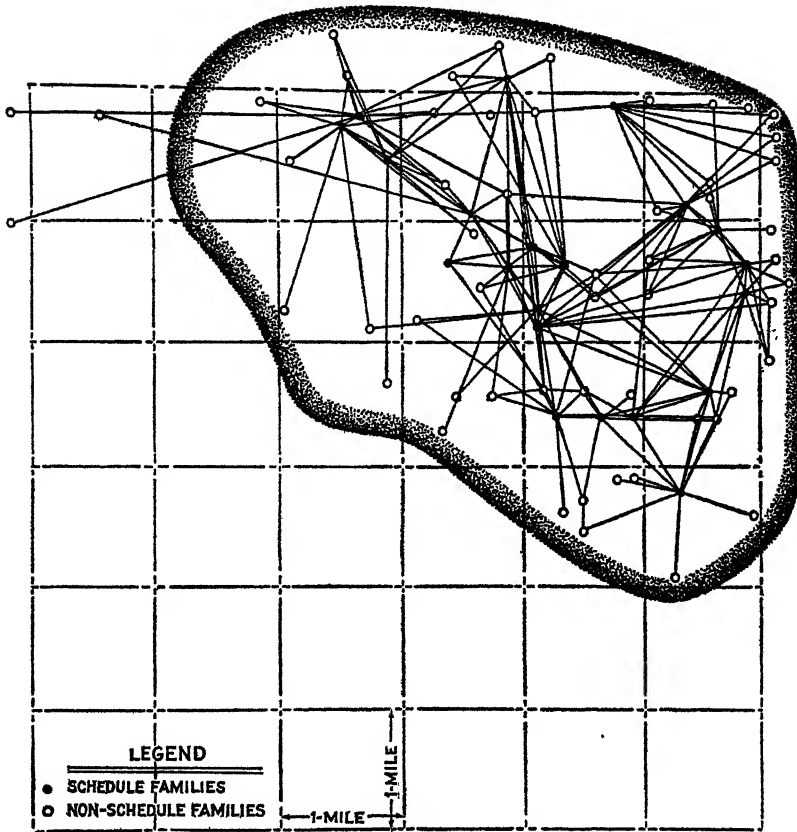


FIG. 2. MOST GARDEN VALLEY FAMILIES EXCHANGED WORK WITH SEVERAL NEIGHBORS

Source: Hill, Slocum, Hill, *Man-Land Adjustment*, Research Bulletin 134, University of Wisconsin, February, 1939.

been made. One illustration is the exchange-of-work pattern of the Garden Valley families. Twenty-one families lived in this neighborhood and, as can be observed from the accompanying chart, a highly developed exchange-of-work pattern exists among them.

Patterns of mutual aid in times of stress were not quite so highly developed, but with few exceptions the families visited with each other as well as with some of the families of Almond Center, the near-by village.

The importance of inter-family relationships, especially in emergency times, can be observed in two other cases which are in contrast with Garden Valley, although located in the same general land area. The first of these is Komensky, a Bohemian settlement of fifty-six families, living in the trade and service area of Black River Falls, a county-seat village of about two thousand people. A very high degree of social life, both formal and informal, was found in this neighborhood. There were picnics, dances, birthday celebrations, and folk festivals. The chart used to show the visiting, exchange-of-work, and inter-dependencies in times of trouble, is a veritable network of interconnected lines. The houses in which the families lived were of good construction, but were without many of the modern conveniences. When family incomes and expenditures were balanced for the year 1935, only seventeen families had deficits; none of the deficits were over one hundred dollars. Twenty-five families had supplemented their farm income from other sources, but only five had turned to relief.

The second is the South Brockway settlement of sixteen families, also in the Black River Falls trade area. Very few inter-family contacts were found; many social maladjustments were evident. These families were not closely united by cultural or mutual interests. There was a greater tendency for them to move about than in the Komensky neighborhood. The chart showing contacts for emergency help is almost a blank, but the visiting lines do connect most of the families with the near-by village families. The standards of housing and family living were low, and when earnings and operating costs were compared, only two families had been able to make their expenses for the year, even though some had secured work off the farm. The others relied on loans, gifts, and relief. Twelve families were receiving some form of public assistance.

It is important that families have a land base, as the previous chapter has shown, but it is also evident that families cannot live successfully when socially and economically isolated. Inter-family relations are a condition of success when measured in terms of self-dependence and social security — terms which

are to be considered in a later chapter. The Komensky and South Brockway settlements are extreme cases, to be sure, for opposite reasons. Garden Valley is the more usual. It is a mixed neighborhood as far as nationality is concerned. Its family contacts are not as frequent nor its interdependencies as great as in Komensky; nevertheless, it has worked out a definite plan of inter-family relations. They are characterized by friendly social contacts, by relatively high standards of living, and by a farm economy which rendered it unnecessary for any family to go on relief during that year. Seven of the families did have to borrow, secure credit, or draw on savings, but they maintained their self-dependence, an achievement far beyond the average socially isolated family in that general area and beyond the grasp of most of the families in the disintegrating neighborhood of South Brockway.

What's in a name? Too much emphasis should not be placed on a neighborhood name, nor does the recognition of a common locality designation by several farm families necessarily determine the presence of a neighborhood. It may be just a local term associated with some geographic feature with no particular evidence of social relationships. There are, for example, Cliffside, Sand Hollow, Pine Ridge, which may or may not designate active groups. Nevertheless, it is not without significance that one means of identification in the country is one's locality or neighborhood name. Nor is it a mere coincidence that such names continue to be recognized year after year. They are frequently used in the local weekly newspaper as headings for country items. They are identified with schools and churches. They are symbols of group life. In the New York county, 1934 families, representing at least 40 per cent of the rural homes, were asked for the name of their neighborhood or locality, and 67 per cent of them gave such names. In the Wisconsin county, a group of 282 identical families, that is, the same families on the same farms, 12 per cent more gave names in 1931 than in 1921. This is significant at least to the extent that it indicates how neighborhood designations and identifications tend to persist.

NEIGHBORHOODS CHANGE

Despite the evidence cited and the implications drawn concerning the persistence of neighborhood groups, their relative stability, the continuance of their local institutions, and the formation of new ones, changes are, nevertheless, taking place. In pointing out the tendency to continue or to persist, we have repeatedly called attention to the tendency to change. In fact, the latter is a condition of the former. Unless there are changes, adjustments, or adaptations, growth stops and life goes out. Persistence itself is a kind of change or process.

We shall now turn our attention to some of the elements which enter into the changes in neighborhood life, and summarize briefly the more characteristic of these changes.

Population changes. Among the most important element affecting neighborhood groups and making readjustments necessary, are population increases or decreases and shifts in the composition of the population, as for example, in the major age groups or in the proportion of foreign-born. This is well illustrated in the case of the Wisconsin county. During the latter part of the ten-year period there was a continued northward movement of the Swiss in fan-shape formation, with New Glarus as the focal point. The county has experienced such wave-like motions of population from its beginning. First, there were the New Englanders or "Yankees," then the Germans and Scandinavians, and now in the southwestern part of the county, the Swiss. Each time a wave moves over an area, readjustments in the social arrangements have to be made. Churches are the first to come and the last to go. In more recent years population migration was a cause for the lapse of neighborhood activities, both in drought-stricken areas which lost population and in those areas which received an influx of people that they could not assimilate. The former circumstance was particularly noticeable in the Middle West, while the latter played an important rôle in the Far West.

Transportation changes. Automobiles and hard-surfaced roads are another means of disturbing the social groups.

Many things are now possible which were quite out of the ken of the pioneering fathers. Federal and state aids, together with campaigns and contests to bring "a good road to every farmer's gate" have opened new opportunities to country people. Some have prophesied that these improved facilities for travel would mean the ultimate dismantling of all rural groups, organizations, and institutions. Changes have taken place, to be sure, but as we have shown, many local neighborhoods and social institutions still have a surprising vitality. Whenever new ways of making contacts or making them more frequently are instituted, rearrangements in social and group affairs are necessary. Farm-to-market roads built during the depression proved a disturbing element to neighborhoods that had experienced a degree of isolation. Thus there was a heavy decline of neighborhoods in Pennsylvania where the state administration attempted to keep its promise of "getting the farmer out of the mud." Results were akin to those of earlier years when hard-surfaced roads upset the life of neighborhoods that lay in their paths.

Increased facility for moving about does not necessarily mean disintegration of all local or all primary groups, however. It may even strengthen them by permitting greater selection of members, larger variety of activities, and wider contacts with other similar groups. In a word, rural groups in the modern régime are more voluntary associations than formerly. An illustration of this was found in the Missouri county which was restudied. In a careful recording of all social contacts for the people of a village center and each of the surrounding eleven school districts, it was found that the annual per capita visiting contacts for the village was 170; for districts adjacent to the village, 108; and for districts not adjacent, 126. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the local visiting or neighboring contacts were 2.7 times as numerous as were the special-interest or organization contacts, both inside and outside the district; and that special-interest or special-activity contacts are more likely to be outside than inside the district in a ratio of 3 to 2. Therefore, as has been suggested, locality and special organization or interest-group arrangements may

develop together. Modern facilities for communication and travel may increase outside contacts, but they may increase the local contacts at an even greater rate.

Agriculture changes. The farm family's relation to its land has also created many problems for the local neighborhood. An illustration of this is found in Orange Township, Blackhawk County, Iowa. Careful studies of this neighborhood were made in 1915, 1920, and 1930. This group consists of a large majority of the 175 families living in one township and having common nationality backgrounds. Its people were members of the same country church. Changes occurred in the fifteen years, but the group still continues. Its church membership has increased, although interestingly enough, its policies have been somewhat liberalized, with the result that the proportion of those in the membership of other than the original nationality stock has increased. With its new church and consolidated school, this group, like others to which reference has been made, is now really more of an institutionally centered group than formerly.

This is a neighborhood of truly wonderful farms and farm homes with all the modern conveniences. Sixty-two per cent have tractors, as compared with 31 per cent for the whole county. Forty per cent have running water in the house; 73 per cent have electric lights. The agricultural distress, however, has caused many serious problems. Farms were lost to families in whose possession they had been for a long time. Tenancy increased to 52 per cent from 39 per cent fifteen years previously, and the ages of both owners and renters had increased several years on the average. Moreover, the desire for ownership on the part of the tenants, as a goal toward which family effort should be directed, was greatly reduced. It had been a compelling motive in the past. It went much beyond mere ownership to the ambition for large houses and barns with the best of modern equipment, and yards with fine lawns and beautiful trees. The tenants agreed that they were doing better financially than the owners, but that ownership, under present conditions, was too arduous and prevented freedom of

movement, which they wished to preserve. For the most part, tenant families held the same attitude as the owners toward such matters as education, church relations, possession of books, newspapers, and automobiles. This would naturally be expected, since practically 50 per cent of them were related by kinship or marriage to the owners, a percentage even higher than fifteen years ago. They had become the recipients of the earlier farm-ownership and improvement ideal. They lived in as large houses, and in proportion to their numbers, had more of the conveniences and modern equipment. Since the desire and means for ownership have been cut off, it is difficult to foresee permanence for this neighborhood group and its institutions.

Organization changes. A really significant change influencing neighborhood relationships is noticeable in the field of organization. Neighborhoods had their first service in the settlement days when "near-by" neighbors meant a great deal. There was not so much of organization, but there was more of dependence and mutual help. Attitudes and opinions from other sections or countries were transported along with the physical "belongings" and were renewed or strengthened by the sanctions of the newly formed groups. Social institutions were soon established and activities initiated. The great organization period came somewhat later, but was certainly effective when it did arrive.

In Dane County, for example, prior to 1928, school, health, agricultural, state, and county leaders organized local groups to carry on their programs of work. Neighborhood groups were considered the logical place to begin. By October, 1928, there were enough local groups whose leaders felt they would profit by a formal county organization. Some had affiliations with a state and national organization, but their officers had experienced difficulties in adapting some of the more standardized features of the larger program to their local situations. They seemed to feel that their own county organization might serve them better; therefore, such a federation of local units was formed. This movement toward greater organization of

local activity and toward affiliation and promotion on a county-wide basis is quite in line with the general trends of this decade, as is shown in the restudies of other areas.

In 1931 there were 54 local groups, members of the Dane County Federation; 29 of them were neighborhoods in the active class. Twenty-five were groups without sufficient other characteristics to allow them to qualify as such. In the majority of cases they were some of the smaller and more restricted mothers' clubs or women's groups, organized on a school district basis, while in a few instances they were local parent-teacher associations of the smaller villages.

The county federation, through its committee organization, promoted and carried to successful completion a county-wide drama tournament for the first time in 1927 and it has done so each year since then. Similarly, in 1931 a music festival was initiated. Joint dinners and programs with an organized group of Madison people are held annually.

County-wide federations of local groups could not have been organized in the horse and buggy days. Local neighborhood organizations within the federation now exchange programs with one another, enter into friendly competition, and modify their own programs on the basis of experience gained in groups of a closely kindred type. It is a fine illustration of intergroup stimulation. Pumpkin Hollow leaders recently recounted how they had enjoyed and profited by an exchange of programs with the Springdale Community Club, and told how they were planning a neighborhood picnic the following Sunday in Ripley Park, just outside Cambridge, nearly twenty-five miles away.

Direction of important changes. The general direction of changes in country neighborhoods may be briefly summarized thus: First, some groups do disappear or lose those elements found in the definitely active groups. In Dane County roughly one third fell out of the recognized active class. In the New York county the proportion was greater. In the 140 village-country communities there was a net decrease of about 16 per cent in the number of neighborhoods. Disappearing neigh-

borhoods may retain their form; they may even appear active. But they tend to take the direction of decadence.

Second, new groups appear or old ones become active again. They assume characteristics which by all the refinements of analysis make them comparable to the older and the more readily recognized groups. These newer groups, however, are more often the result of deliberate organization, promotion, or voluntary association. They are centered generally about certain interests such as social activity, drama, or club programs. They are less dependent upon tradition, nationality, locality, or religious purpose than the older ones.

Third, there is a tendency for neighborhoods to retain or to assume only certain kinds of functions. They are less self-sufficing than some were at the time of the earlier studies, whose traditions carried back to settlement days, and whose strong nationality or kinship bonds were often sheltered from outside influences by the topography of the country. Open-country neighborhoods retain their schools and churches, but also take on certain social activities and give up certain economic services. Specialization has set in, although this trend has been somewhat checked in more recent years.

Fourth, neighborhoods in the immediate vicinity of small towns or villages tend to give way first. Their functions are slowly assumed by the larger town-country community unit. Because of freer and more frequent contacts this larger group becomes more primary or personal in character, whereas formerly it was likely to be largely of a secondary order.

Fifth, the number of hamlet class of neighborhoods tends to be augmented by the addition of village-centered groups that have not been able to maintain the standing of a village community. Distances measured in time units have shrunk. In the process some village centers have settled back to a hamlet status. As was pointed out earlier, they are not essentially different from the more nearly open-country groups centered about two or more local institutions. This trend was very evident in the case of the New York county, and in the 140 town-country communities distributed over the nation.

Sixth, interests, organizations, or institutions are at present playing a larger part in group retention and formation, while locality, tradition, and just "living together" play a lesser part than earlier. By reference to earlier neighborhood maps, it must certainly be stressed, however, that few groups in the active class in 1931 are to be found in areas entirely void of the traditional locality groups. It is the background and foundation of local neighborhoods, not the non-grouped areas which form the basis for the more modern type of country group.

NEIGHBORHOODS RELATED TO OTHER RURAL GROUPS

A final important question to be considered in this chapter is that of changing relationships of neighborhoods with other rural groups, especially with the larger community consisting of town or village and country people. This rural community becomes the subject for a later chapter.

The 1936 restudy of the 140 rural communities showed that neighborhoods had greater vitality at some distance from the growing and larger village or town centers. It was significant to find that 33 communities had no active neighborhoods within their boundaries, compared with only three in 1924. This is evidence of closer village-country integration. Neighborhoods are also likely to appear at a distance of four to six miles from cities of 8000 to 15,000 population. Such local centers, often hamlets, had lost many of their services to the cities, but some industrial regions had gained commuters.

Distance continues, therefore, to play a part in neighborhood affairs. As a growing village or larger city draws more and more of the secondary services to itself, a demand seems to arise from country people for some kind of local and convenient centers, close at hand, to supply some of the more primary social services. In a number of the Far West communities studied recently it appeared as though some farm

leaders had definitely decided upon what they wanted supplied at the village center, and what they determined to keep in their own neighborhoods. One such leader urged that farmers must maintain "a real sense of possession and control" over at least the services of recreation for both youth and adults, religious education for the youth, some forms of adult education, and co-operative marketing of produce and purchasing of supplies. If this could be done advantageously with the villages, this leader would be satisfied, but if distances were too great and the "possession or control" was to be lost, he would insist that the services be organized on a neighborhood basis, with such co-operation with villages or other neighborhoods, as was required.

Three cases will now be described to show how changes in neighborhood life occur, and to indicate how larger group relationships develop. Local cases are, after all, a lively and interesting way to study rural society, or any society for that matter.

The case of Pleasant Hill, Oregon. The most clearly defined, and in many respects the most interesting open-country community in Lane County, has its center on Pleasant Hill, twelve miles southeast of Eugene, between the Coast Fork and the Middle Fork of the Willamette. Here the five neighborhoods of Evendale, Coastfork, Enterprise, Trent, and Pleasant Hill join in supporting the oldest open-country high school in Oregon.

There is no feeling of diversity of interests between the people at the center and those on the outskirts of the high-school district; the church, the hall, the cemetery, and the high school border the road at dignified distances which make it clear that here is no thought of an organized town. Until recently the store was a mile and a half from the blacksmith shop.

The Pleasant Hill neighborhood grew up about the farm of Elijah Bristow, first settler in Lane County. Bristow, a veteran of the War of 1812, was a sturdy pioneer, a member of the Disciples of Christ, father of fifteen, and a native of

Kentucky, who came to California in 1845 as an emigrant from Illinois. In 1846, he came to Oregon and in 1848 took a donation land claim, built the first house in Lane County, and later asked the Legislature for permission to name his farm Pleasant Hill.

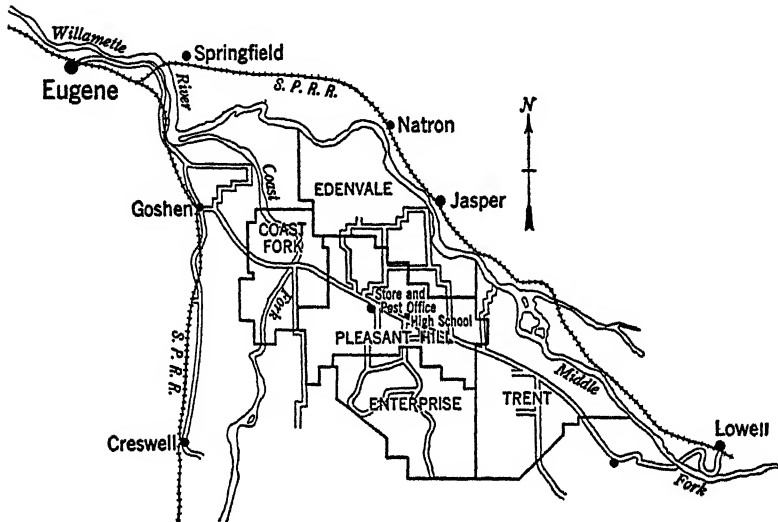


FIG. 3. MAP SHOWING LOCATION AND EXTENT OF PLEASANT HILL COMMUNITY

Source: A Rural Survey of Lane County, Oregon, made by Country Church Work Board of Home Missions Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1916.

Bristow and his family entered upon this fertile land and possessed it with a thoroughness which must be considered the most significant factor in establishing the unity of the Pleasant Hill community. They initiated and for many years controlled the religious and educational activities of the community. For more than fifty years, the center of the Pleasant Hill community remained where Bristow made the first settlement. The stones of the chimney of his house are now preserved in a memorial watering trough in front of the post office, only a few hundred yards from the site of the original building. In the spring of 1910 when the site of the

Union High School was definitely fixed, the real center of the district may be said to have moved somewhat.

The high school was established in 1907. When the proposition was made by the County Superintendent and some members of the faculty of the University of Oregon, to organize the first open-country high school in Oregon, the five districts comprising the neighborhoods of Evendale, Trent, Coastfork, Enterprise, and Pleasant Hill voted without any serious opposition to make the experiment.

Union High School Number One is the strongest force now operating to hold the Pleasant Hill community together. It was established just in time; otherwise, the community would even now be breaking up, following a tendency toward disintegration that becomes more noticeable as the farms fill up with people who knew not Elijah and who owe no allegiance to the Christian Church. From the first the high school has offered four years of work. For six years it has graduated at least seven students annually, and holds within its student body practically the entire high-school population of the district, some forty young men and women.

Nothing but the high school could have preserved the integrity of the community against the influence of the small towns by which it is surrounded. Each of these towns has a logical claim to some part of the Pleasant Hill territory, but none can at present effectively enforce its claim because not one can offer to the country people any social or educational advantages superior to those at present available in the open country.¹

The case of Otsego County, New York. The tendency toward the organization of rural life into larger units is shown by the organization of central rural school districts in this county. This case is cited because it is almost a perfect illustration of a tendency found in many sections of the country, and one which is made the basis for a plan of community organization described in Chapter XXIV. Nine central school districts were

¹ Morse, H. N., *A Rural Survey of Lane County, Oregon*, in co-operation with Extension Division University of Oregon, Eugene.

organized in the ten years between the two studies. These schools are located in the villages. In addition, five other similar district plans are proposed, the formation of which, together with those already in existence and those formed in adjoining counties, will mean that the majority of the common-school districts of the county will be included in some larger unit plan. Depending on the wishes of the people, the local country school may be maintained for the first six grades; but beginning with the junior high school or seventh grade, all pupils will be transported to the central school. A striking similarity was found between the community service areas of the fourteen larger centers in the county and the high-school areas. In fact, with two or three exceptions, the areas of the central school districts already established coincide very closely with the service areas of the larger village centers in which the school buildings are located. This is additional evidence of the importance of the high school in modern rural life, to which repeated reference will be made.

In this larger school arrangement, country children are sure to form friendships that in time will tend to weaken neighborhood activity and strengthen the connection of country and village centers. Organizations serving young people tend to be located in such centers also. For example, 14 of the 24 Grange halls in the county are located in villages, as are 23 of the 30 Home Bureaus, and 31 of the 42 Farm Bureaus. Similar tendencies were discovered in many of the 140 village communities. With such a concentration of educational and agricultural life, it seems logical to anticipate the decline of the neighborhood and the increase of the larger community plan of rural group organization in counties of the type of Otsego.

The case of Oregon, Wisconsin. The most striking change in the case of the Oregon community is the "social" consolidation of five near-by country school districts with the village grade school. The "legal" consolidation is far from a reality. This tendency for social action to precede legal sanction is an important process in rural society and one which local lay leaders as well as professional workers need to understand more fully;

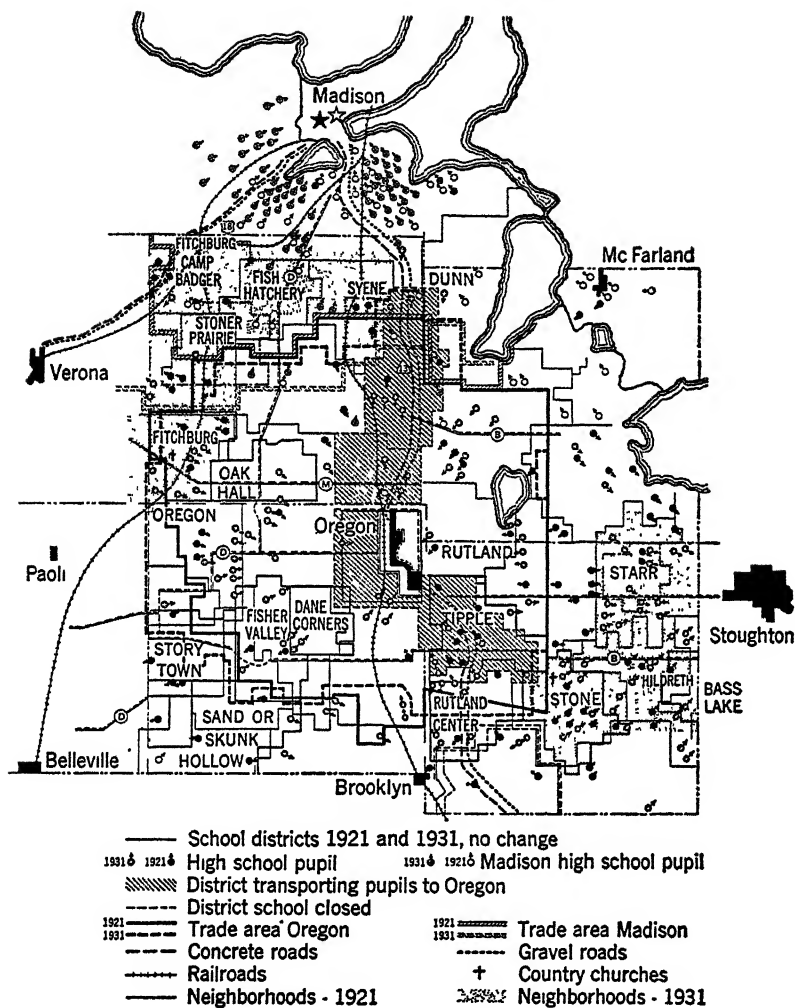


FIG. 4. THE CASE OF THE OREGON COMMUNITY AS A PARTICULAR LOCALITY IN 1921 AND 1931

Group relationships and interdependencies can be seen when the various features and the different areas are brought together into one picture.

Source: Kolb, J. H., *Trends of Country Neighborhoods: A Restudy of Rural Primary Groups, 1921-37*. Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Research Bulletin 120, November, 1933.

hence, the inclusion of this case story. Each of the five districts has its annual school meetings and votes to request the village school to teach their children for a tuition remuneration. They also vote to pay for the transportation to the village. The concreting of the state highway Number 13 had much to do with forwarding this plan. Leaders in the local districts were nearly unanimous in their praise of the plan, but they were equally united in their determination not to consolidate legally with the village. They emphasized the things they might have to give up rather than the things they might have to gain. Tradition apparently still lays a heavy hand upon many shoulders.

Many organizations and social activities are now on the larger community basis. Neighborhoods within the area have felt this tendency. Of those fairly close to the village center only Fitchburg remained active in 1931, mainly because of its small post office, store, feed mill, and church. This does not mean that all social or group life has gone from the open country. There are still informal and special interest-group activities on the neighborhood basis such as the social club in the old Tipple district, the cemetery association at Rutland Center, and the mothers' clubs at Oak Hall and Stoner Prairie. It does mean, however, that the larger community in this particular locality is on the ascendancy for certain types of social activities. Some of these activities centered in the village of Oregon and others in Madison or beyond. For those centering in Oregon, there is little or no distinction made between village and country youth. The experiences in the high school obliterated what differences there may have been. This is a factor of much importance in the future of town and country relations.

In final summary, it can be said that some country neighborhoods come and some go, while many live on. Change, however, is characteristic of most of them. There can be no doubt that country people are anxious and, as in many places the evidence shows, are determined to maintain at least some measure of local primary group identity, either by continuing

old forms or remodeling them, or by building new ones. Neighborhoods with vital interests and modern activities do furnish an outlet for group expression and create an opportunity for group morale. They are the means by which many forms of home talent, including drama, music, discussion, and recreation may be developed. It is from the traditional soil of the older neighborhood life that the more modern types of country groups arise and flourish. Yet, at the same time, country people are expanding the range of their contacts and extending their social relationships so that the web of group life in rural society enmeshes in its design, not only families and neighborhoods, but villages, larger communities, and even cities.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Draw an outline map of a rural or an urban situation with which you are personally acquainted, locating the following:
 - a. The home with which you are acquainted.
 - b. The boundaries of a recognized neighborhood.
 - c. The location of the important social and economic institutions with which this home has regular contacts.
2. List in their order of importance the factors which have created the neighborhood you have outlined above, or if there is no such recognized grouping, the factors which have prevented such an arrangement.
3. Characterize and give reasons for changes which are taking place in primary or personal groupings in present-day society, first rural and second urban.
4. What forces are tending to integrate, and what to disintegrate, country neighborhoods?
5. Why do neighborhoods with local social institutions such as church, school, or club tend to persist longer than those without institutions?
6. What functions do you think country neighborhoods may well render in the future?

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CHAPTER IV

AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES

MIDWAY between the country and the city stands the village or small town, sharing the nature of each but having its own peculiar characteristics. Rural society can be divided into two parts, namely, farm and non-farm, as the chapter on rural population will point out. The non-farm population represents an increasing element and one which is frequently neglected in discussions of rural society. A majority of the non-farm, rural population is made up of village or small-town people. It includes also, of course, part-time farmers living on acreages which do not come under the census definition of a "farm," and people who live in rural territory but work in cities. More strictly speaking, a village is a population center or cluster ranging in size from 250 to 2500 people. It may or may not be legally incorporated, although unless it is, it will not be enumerated in the census. Smaller places are called hamlets, as the previous chapter has explained.

The question is often raised regarding the future of the small town. Does it have a chance in a modern society of concrete highways, radios, automobiles, city newspapers, chain stores, and national advertising? Unless it does have a degree of stability or at least enough power to hold its own, it is idle to talk of its opportunities for future development in relation to rural life and agriculture. But before answering the question whether it *is* holding its own and what place it is taking in rural society, we may well look into its origins and backgrounds.

HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED

Agricultural villages were more often than not the residence centers and the primary social groups of rural society in many Old World countries, as the previous chapter on country neigh-

borhoods has suggested. In New England and in certain regions of the West, the plan was continued by the pioneer settlers, but in most other parts of the country the village or small town has other origins. Inasmuch as settlement was first made on individual farms in neighborhood groups, the small town came later as an adjunct to the agricultural enterprise, performing services of transporting, retailing, and financing. Or, as was often the case in Mid-Western and Western settlements, the town was deliberately projected and made the spearhead of railroad development into new territory in order to stimulate settlement and provide new business. It is reported that one railroad company whose track traversed a particularly fertile agricultural state actually "planted" towns at five-mile intervals along its right-of-way, so as to develop a volume of business for itself.

However started, the town soon became an economic or business center rather than a social or residence center for farm families. The enterprise may have been trading, manufacturing on a small scale, mining, shipbuilding, or fishing. For these and various other reasons, the nucleated agricultural village failed to make headway on American soil.

In this failure Professor Gras believes that America suffered a great social loss.¹ In Europe as elsewhere, he emphasizes, close proximity has meant the development of such daily social contacts as group singing or dancing, and various other forms of social activity. "Such things," he says, "lead to rural amenities and to rural art of which America has had all too little." In similar manner, he suggests that co-operation in social affairs prepares the way for co-operation in the business phases of agriculture, which in this country has grown slowly and with many set-backs. A very important cause of this was the fact that farms in America were too large to be compressed into a village form of organization. It is of interest, however, to find that in periods of emergency when farm families, because they have pushed too far out toward the margins, must be re-located, or when city workers, because they have no employ-

¹ Gras, N. S. B., *A History of Agriculture*, chap. II. Crofts & Co., New York, 1925.

ment, are encouraged to move to the country, the question of the village type of settlement is again being considered by those who are guiding governmental policies.

Business rather than social enterprises and residence, then, can be said to be an important origin or background of the American rural village or small town. Small manufacturing, trade, and transportation were important early business enterprises and their importance has continued, as a later section of the chapter will indicate.

There is little possibility of succeeding in tracing the relative importance of these three types of business enterprise, and probably small value in doing so, but it should be pointed out in passing that the shipping or the transporting function, whether it consisted of sending grain or livestock away to city markets or of receiving merchandise for local retailing, was especially important in locating town centers. As Professor Cooley described the process, wherever any shipping or transporting service was needed, there a town or city usually appeared. It may have been a fork in a river where cargoes had to be divided; it may have been a place where transfers from water to land or land to water had to be made; or, it may have been a division point where carload lots were broken up for smaller shipments, or where train crews were changed. In any case, the great network of transportation and communication systems does tend to converge at centers and, as will be more evident later, the services or functions performed by the centers bear a recognizable relationship to their distances apart, as well as to the size and character of their populations.

There is also a political background or origin of the small town or village. In his description of *A Hoosier Village*, Professor Sims tells of a typical situation in the early history of Indiana in which two enterprising pioneers took up land and went about organizing a county seat for local government.¹ They divided their land into lots, made a town plan, and proceeded to see that a courthouse, jail, and other county political institutions were located there. Business establishments and

¹ Sims, N. L., *A Hoosier Village*. Columbia University Press, 1912.

residents soon accumulated: the store, the inn, the blacksmith shop, the abstract office, the country weekly newspaper, and so on, until a thriving political center was established. The influence of county-seat functions is still very important and is easily recognizable in the study of the 140 town-country communities which is detailed in the next chapter.

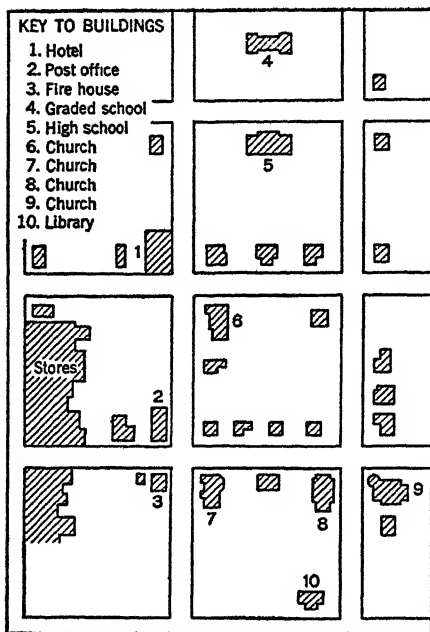


FIG. 5. THE "BUSINESS" TYPE OF VILLAGE WITH STRAIGHT LINES AND SQUARE CORNERS

Source: Douglass, H. Paul, *The Little Town*. The Macmillan Company, 1921.

Still another feature to be considered is the physical layout of the village or small town together with its organization or "legal incorporation," as it is termed. For numerous reasons, which in themselves would make an interesting study, very many of the "business" type villages or towns were laid out on straight lines, with square corners in checker-board fashion, with the business blocks featured, but often with little or no plan for future development. The square or rectangular effect can be seen in the accompanying diagram.

Other towns were strung along a main street, a railroad track, or a river. In marked contrast were the villages or towns, laid out in the East as "social" or residence centers. They were frequently built about a "common" with prominent blocks given over to public buildings, schools, and churches. A simple plan illustrating the triangular type of town common is seen in the diagram. Other types, according to Professor Waugh, are the wide-street type as represented by

Northfield, and the quadrangular type as represented by Amherst. Definite planning was done in advance and an effort was made to make the village a pleasant and attractive place in which to live. More recently much has been done to beautify and improve some of the rectangular "business" centers by setting aside and fitting up parks and playgrounds, by such public improvement as lighting, and by encouraging private planting and landscaping.

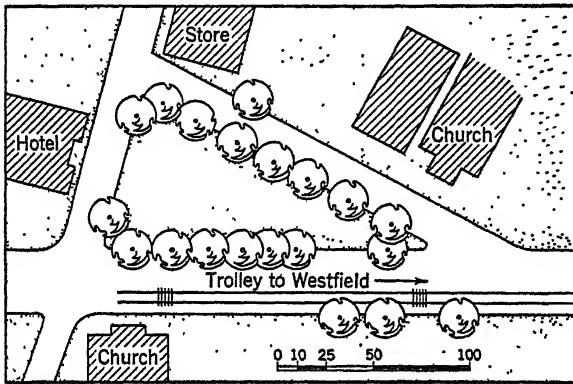


FIG. 6. TRIANGLE TYPE OF TOWN COMMON, HUNTINGTON TOWN COMMON, MASSACHUSETTS

Source: Waugh, F. A., *The Town Common*, Extension Bulletin 7, Amherst, June, 1916, Massachusetts State College and the United States Department of Agriculture co-operating.

Associated with the so-called "Western" and "business" type of village or small town, perhaps not by definite design, but certainly out of a similar traditional background, came the practice of incorporating, that is, setting the town off legally from the surrounding country. As described before, the strictly agricultural villages of New England and Utah did not so incorporate; politically, as well as socially, they remained part and parcel of the country. This physical, legal, and mental severance of the town from the country is one of the traditions and backgrounds of far-reaching consequence in any plan for improvement of town and country relations. In the early country neighborhood there was a certain assumption of self-sufficiency, and in the incorporated municipality there was

a certain sense of superiority or completeness, a facing away from the country, often toward the city.

In similar manner, certain social institutions have come to be associated with and to belong to the town: high school, library, hospital, theater, park, and newspaper. Country people use them, but it is "by leave" of the town people. They do not "belong" to them. Dr. Galpin has phrased the situation in the following significant paragraph:

The banker, storekeeper and blacksmith know the farmer as the goose that lays the golden egg. The problem is one of pleasing him and getting his trade without building him and his mind, capacities and wishes into the community fabric. The farmer's money is good and necessary and must be obtained, and his good will retained. But how to accomplish this object is a problem. Thoroughgoing incorporation of the farmer into the stream of village activities is frustrated by the fundamental conception of the self-sufficing of the village. The farmer does not share in the control and responsibility of certain things which he occasionally enjoys at the village as a spectator. The outlying farm population is seldom massed. Its members come to town by team or automobile, on foot or horseback, do their business without a resting place of their own, stand on other people's streets, in other people's shops, and over other people's counters. They go back after some hours of absence to their own lands, occupations and homes. In the village they are aliens, but aliens with a possible title to be conciliated. The embarrassment is on both sides. The farmer pays in so much in trade that he feels he ought to have consideration; he pays so little directly toward the institutions that the village considers that his rights are not compelling. Puzzle, perplexity, and embarrassment obscure the whole relationship and situation, and the process of legalized insulation of the village and city away from the farm which has grown up undisputed, with scarcely a hint of abnormality, is constantly shadowed by this overhanging cloud of doubt.¹

Greatly improved facilities for travel and communication providing increased freedom of movement and thought to both country and village people, have changed certain details of the situation, but focus attention on the problem even more than

¹ Galpin, C. J., *The Social Anatomy of a Rural Community*, Research Bulletin 34, p. 25, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, May, 1915.

when this paragraph was written. The village continues to need the country, and the country still needs the village social and educational institutions even more than formerly, although perhaps it is not so dependent on the economic and business institutions as it was at one time. Is a newer community, a collation of town and country, arising in rural society because of this mutual need? Questions of the place of the village or town in modern rural society and its power to survive and to perform needed services must be faced before that problem can be considered.

THE MODERN VILLAGE OR SMALL TOWN — ITS PLACE IN RURAL SOCIETY

The village or small town continues in modern American life as an important social grouping in rural society. In fact, its place is nearly unique, for, as has been explained, agricultural villages in the Old World were residence centers for farm families. In such countries as Australia and in the more important South American countries, the division of population is more often between larger commercial centers and the open country. Intermediate towns and villages have less importance. In the United States modern life seems to need the village, town, and smaller city. They stand midway between the larger city and open country. They form a special type of group life. They have certain distinguishing characteristics and fall into certain recognized types.

Villages or small towns — Their number and distribution. The number of villages and small towns together with the amount of population which they harbor is one indication of their significance in rural society. In 1920 there were 10,239 incorporated villages (250 to 2500 population) reported in the census with a total population of 8,509,659. This is a million more than the whole population of New England. In 1930 the figures were 10,661 villages and 8,734,389 people. But not all villages or hamlets are incorporated and therefore cannot be found in the census reports. It was estimated that in 1920

there were 8142 such unincorporated villages (250 to 2500 population) with a total population of 4,348,862. There was probably an increase by 1930, which means that in that year there were approximately thirteen million Americans living in about nineteen thousand villages. One person in every nine was a villager, and the ratio of villagers to the total population was surprisingly constant for every region. If we state it in slightly different terms, villages are distributed over the country in much the same proportion as the population as a whole, the most notable exception being in the Mountain division where the number of villages is disproportionately large.

By using both census and Rand-McNally Atlas figures, Fry arrived at the estimate that in 1920 the total village population, including incorporated and unincorporated villages, represented 24 per cent of the total rural population. Paul Landis estimates about 26 per cent for both 1920 and 1930.¹

TABLE 5. PROPORTION OF THE RURAL POPULATION (EXCLUDING NEW ENGLAND) THAT RESIDES IN VILLAGES, BY DIVISIONS, 1920 *

Division	Per cent Village Population to Total Rural Population
United States, excluding New England.....	24
Middle Atlantic.....	39
East North Central.....	29
West North Central.....	27
South Atlantic.....	17
East South Central.....	13
West South Central.....	20
Mountain.....	33
Pacific.....	32

* Fry, C. Luther, *American Villagers*. George H. Doran Co., 1926.

This average of about one villager to every four persons in the rural population would have been much higher except for the low proportions in the Southern divisions. This difference in ratios by divisions can be observed in the table. In the South the plantation system, under which many relatively self-sufficing units were developed, made for a lower density of population, or, in other words, a smaller number of villages in

¹ Landis, Paul H., *Research Studies of the State College of Washington*, vol. VI, no. 4, December, 1938.

proportion to the total rural population than in other regions. Moreover, the purchasing power of the farmers, due in part to the large numbers of Negro and white croppers and tenants, is lower in some Southern areas than elsewhere. As a result there is simply not the business necessary to sustain as many village centers.

Village population is not to be assumed as identical with rural non-farm population. The proportion of rural population living in villages has changed very little since 1910, while the total rural non-farm population increased 18 per cent between 1920 and 1930, two points more than the national rate of growth. In 1930 this rural non-farm element represented twenty-three million people, over two fifths of the total rural population.

Agricultural villagers — Some characteristics. The village has been in existence in American rural society long enough to have developed some of its own characteristics. These will be detailed in the population chapter, but a brief summary of them here will help to build up a more vivid conception of the agricultural village group. In terms of changes or trends in the decade, 1920 to 1930, agricultural villagers are older in years and a larger proportion of them is married. School attendance has increased. In the matter of occupations they find employment in four major fields: manufacturing, merchandising, agriculture, and transportation; of these, merchandising has made the largest gains in the decade. There were fewer very young and very old men, but there was a consistent increase in the number of women gainfully employed.

Comparing village with city and farm population, we find that the villages tend to represent a mid-point in many of their characteristics; that is, a point toward which both city and farm population seem to be approaching. For example, in the proportion of native and foreign-born white, in the ratio of children to women, and in the percentages in many age groups, city and farm population was more nearly like the village in 1930 than in 1920. The statement that midway between the country and the city stands the village, is based, therefore, on population characteristics as well as on geographic location.

Rural service centers — Some types. Agricultural villages are also aggregations of service agencies for farmers and villagers, as well as centers of residence for villagers, but not for farmers. It is possible, therefore, to describe and to classify them on the basis of functions performed and to observe that a close relationship exists between such classifications and their population. This relationship can be seen in Table 6.

(1) *The single, simple service type.* This type of center is usually an open-country neighborhood or hamlet center where single and comparatively simple or undifferentiated services are performed. The agencies in such centers may be school, church, general store, Grange hall, or repair shop. These centers usually fall into the hamlet classification; that is, places of less than 250 persons.

(2) *The limited, simple service type.* This type of service center may range in size from about 200 to 400 or 500 people. Villages in this class fall short of providing what may be termed a "six-service standard," that is, of having agencies in all of the following groups of services: economic, educational, religious, social, communication, professional.

(3) *The semi-complete, intermediate type.* This type of center averages about 800 or 1000 people with a range from about 400 to over 1200. In certain Middle Western states it is the most frequent type. It is intermediate because it stands midway between the type last mentioned and the larger centers represented by county-seat towns or centers of larger size, and farther away from the average farm. It is incomplete because it is frequently lacking in fulfillment of the six-service standard. It may have a bus line but no railroad; a high school but a small one; a market but with inadequate processing agencies for raw products. Its trade area is relatively large and its merchandising agencies frequently draw as much as 75 per cent of their business from farm sources.

(4) *The complete, partially specialized type.* This type averages about 2500 or more persons and may range from 1200 to 5000 or just a little over. Its agencies are numerous enough to cover all the more common needs and differentiated enough to

TABLE 6. SERVICE CENTERS IN AND ABOUT WALWORTH COUNTY,
CLASSIFIED BY TYPES WITH POPULATIONS FOR 1910 AND 1930

Major Types	Minor Classes	Names of Centers	Population	
			1910	1930
Rural or country centers	Neighbor- hood or hamlet centers	East Delavan	10†	12†
		Tibbets	154†	25†
		Como	30	30†
		*Millard	50†	40†
		La Grange	100	100†
		Troy	25†	100†
		Powers Lake	51†	100†
		Zenda	102†	100†
		Lake Beulah	100†	100†
		Springfield	251†	100†
		Spring Prairie	153†	120†
		Richmond	211†	200†
		Troy Center	117†	200†
	Very small village centers	Allen Grove	321†	300†
		*Honey Creek	300†	300†
		Fontana	300†	385
		Eagle	339	392
		*Lyons	400†	400†
Rurban or town- country centers	Village or small town centers of semi- complete service	Richmond (Ill.)	554	514
		Hebron (Ill.)	644	608
		Williams Bay	553†	630
		Palmyra	649	642
		*Genoa City	709	683
		*Darien	389†	700†
		*Sharon	879	733
		*East Troy	673	800
		Muckwanago	615	846
		*Walworth	755	920
	Town or small city centers of complete service	*Elkhorn	1,707	2,340
		Harvard (Ill.)	2,008	2,988
		*Lake Geneva	3,079	3,073
		*Delavan	2,450	3,301
		*Whitewater	3,224	3,465
		Burlington	3,212	4,114
Urban or city centers	City centers	Waukesha	8,740	17,176
		Janesville	13,894	21,628
		Beloit	15,125	23,611
		Kenosha	21,371	50,262
		Racine	38,002	67,542
	Metro- politan centers	Milwaukee	373,857	578,249
		Chicago	2,185,283	3,376,438

* The twelve centers included in original and in present study.

† Unincorporated places. Population figures are taken from 1920 and 1931 editions of Cram's Atlas of the World. Other population figures are from the Census of the United States, 1910 and 1930.

take on specialized characteristics. Its services are often rendered on a less personal basis than in the small centers. Together with its tributary community area, it has some elements of functional self-sufficiency.

(5) *The urban, highly specialized types.* These types, which need further refined classifications, are, of course, represented by the larger city or even metropolitan centers. Their interests assume larger proportions and are divided into such occupations as manufacturing, wholesaling, and financing. They are the centers in which farmers and their wives as well as the villagers shop when quality, variety, and opportunity for a wide and discriminating selection are the determining factors. They cannot cater to general trade needs as can the small town. They specialize to a high degree. The farmer does not look for spools of barbed wire on the city square, but his wife does shop there for some of her choice, ready-to-wear clothing — at least, she likes to do her window shopping there.

THE QUESTION OF VILLAGE GROWTH AND DECLINE

Having described the origins, backgrounds, and types of American villages, we may now return to the question raised in the opening paragraphs of the chapter regarding the future of the small town or village. One way of discerning future trends is to determine whether this type of population center is growing, declining, or merely holding its own.

To answer the question of the growth, decline, or stability of villages with any degree of reliability, it was necessary to do a great deal of careful tabulation and analysis. Definitions and classifications had to be observed. Comparisons of similar units over periods of time had to be made. Special and detailed tabulations of census materials had to be undertaken. A brief review of the results of these analyses will be given.²

² For complete report of the analysis of the original study of agricultural villages by Dr. Fry and for the results of the more recent restudy, see Fry, C. Luther, *American Villagers*, George H. Doran Co., 1926; Lorge, Irving, *American Agricultural Villages*, 1930, American Statistical Association, Editorial Office, Columbia University, New York, 1933; and Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

The first question was whether all incorporated places of less than 2500 population were maintaining their proportionate share of the total population and whether their average population was increasing or declining. The second test was to take all the places of 250 to 2500 in size which were incorporated in 1910, and to follow them through the next two decades, regardless of whether or not they remained in the "village" class or passed to the "urban" class, as defined by the census. The third task was to make a comparison of changes in a specially selected sample of agricultural villages with the trends discovered for all villages. These three questions will now be considered in turn.

Villages holding their own in total population. When all incorporated places under 2500, including the incorporated hamlets of less than 250, were taken together and compared with the total population and with the rural population for the two census decades, it was discovered that they are just about holding their own in the general trend of population growth. Consider first the total population: such incorporated places contained 8.9 per cent of the population in 1910, 8.5 per cent in 1920, and 7.5 per cent in 1930. Taking just the rural population, we find that they represented 16.4 per cent in 1910; 17.4 per cent in 1920, and 17.1 per cent in 1930.

Comparison of average size for the incorporated villages of 250 to 2500 alone reveals similar trends. If we take all the villages which were in this classification in 1910 and which remained there until 1930, the average size increased from 838 to 882, a gain of about 7 per cent. Or, if we consider the 878 villages incorporated after 1910 but before 1920, the average increase to 1930 was from 678 to 763, or about 12 per cent. It is only when the 617 incorporated hamlets which rose to the village class between 1910 and 1930 and averaging 375 are included, that the average size of all places that were villages in 1930 is smaller for any region than was the average in 1910. Although the general average remained practically the same, there was a small decrease on this basis in six of the eight census

regions. Similar comparisons of numerous sorts can be traced by use of the figures in Table 7.¹

TABLE 7. POPULATION OF INCORPORATED VILLAGES IN 1910, 1920, AND 1930 AND OF THOSE INCORPORATED DURING THE TWO DECADES, BY DIVISIONS*

Census Division	Incorporated Villages in 1910		Incorporated Villages in 1920					
			Total		Incorporated by 1920		Incorporated 1910-20	
	No.	Av. Pop.	No.	Av. Pop.	No.	Av. Pop.	No.	Av. Pop.
All divisions.....	8,882†	823†	9,244	856	8,206	879	1,038	678
Middle Atlantic...	1,010	1,007	998	1,031	906	1,037	92	965
East North Central.	2,269	820	2,258	833	2,106	846	152	653
West North Central.	2,339	718	2,384	749	2,216	772	168	449
South Atlantic.....	1,184	790	1,217	862	1,087	891	130	615
East South Central.	655	817	686	855	605	884	81	635
West South Central.	825	909	974	949	750	1,007	224	757
Mountain†.....	250	844	343	864	232	970	111	643
Pacific.....	350	929	384	963	304	993	80	853

Census Division	Total		Incorporated Villages in 1930					
			Incorporated by 1930		Incorporated 1920-30		Incorporated 1920-30	
	No.	Av. Pop.	No.	Av. Pop.	No.	Av. Pop.	No.	Av. Pop.
All divisions.....	9,499	853	7,822	882	878	763	799	670
Middle Atlantic...	1,041	1,026	836	1,051	77	1,003	128	877
East North Central.	2,342	819	2,067	841	135	770	140	561
West North Central.	2,356	734	2,149	758	138	517	69	433
South Atlantic.....	1,272	886	1,025	932	108	820	139	601
East South Central.	705	893	576	932	69	787	60	637
West South Central.	1,061	931	686	1,014	196	786	179	770
Mountain†	362	825	216	975	101	669	45	456
Pacific.	360	958	267	964	54	983	39	882

* Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933. Source: Special tabulations of census data for 1910, 1920, and 1930.

† Only Utah, New Mexico, Colorado, and Montana were included.

‡ There are slight discrepancies between Tables 8 and 7. These are to be attributed to the fact that the data of Table 8 were in some instances derived from preliminary first releases, whereas the data of Table 7 were computed from the *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population*, vol. 1, issued in 1931. Since the differences in average populations as derived by these two independent hand counts were negligible, it was felt that the money of the study could be spent more profitably in pioneering new fields than in checking Table 8.

* Hamlets, when submitted to similar comparisons, also gave some evidence of growth but not to the extent of villages. For example, of the 1959 hamlets existing as incorporated places in 1910, one fifth had become villages by 1920 and over one fourth by 1930. Again, of the 507 incorporated between 1910 and 1930, about one fifth had moved into the village class by 1930. The average size of all places which remained hamlets in this period decreased from 173 to 162, but the average for those which were hamlets in 1910 increased to about 250 by 1930.

Comparing the same villages for the twenty-year period. It has already become evident that villages and hamlets do not stay in the fixed classifications established by the Census Bureau. They move in and out, and therefore are frequently lost in a comparison analysis. Between 1910 and 1930, for example, about one thousand villages, more than a tenth of the total number, moved up out of the "village" and "hamlet" class, defined as incorporated places of less than 2500 inhabitants, into the "urban" class. Unless this tendency is taken into account, the true picture is not seen.

All of the 8900 villages, defined more strictly as those incorporated places from 250 to 2500 in population, which fell into this classification in 1910 were therefore followed through for twenty years. This procedure required much careful tracing, but it proved very interesting. It revealed that villages of this classification were growing at about the national rate of increase for the total population, which is just another way of saying that villages were holding their own. From Table 8 it would seem that the rate of gain for the villages was 15.2 per cent from 1910 to 1920, a period in which the total population increased 14.9 per cent. The village rate from 1920 to 1930 was 15.0 per cent, and the national rate was 16.1 per cent. For the whole period the village rate was 32.5 per cent and the

TABLE 8. AVERAGE POPULATION IN 1910, 1920, AND 1930, AND RATE OF GROWTH OF THE 8900 VILLAGES INCORPORATED BY 1910, BY DIVISIONS *

Census Division†	Number of Villages	Average Population			Rate of Growth		
		1910	1920	1930	1910 to 1920 Per cent	1920 to 1930 Per cent	1910 to 1930 Per cent
All divisions....	8,900	833	960	1,104	15.2	15.0	32.5
Middle Atlantic.	1,018	1,023	1,208	1,530	18.1	26.6	49.6
East North Central	2,276	826	885	982	7.1	10.9	21.3
West North Central...	2,363	741	822	839	10.9	2.0	13.2
South Atlantic.....	1,189	796	981	1,193	10.7	21.6	49.9
East South Central.	656	820	946	1,117	15.4	18.0	36.2
West South Central...	831	915	1,138	1,339	24.4	17.7	46.3
Mountain‡	250	844	994	1,032	17.8	3.7	22.3
Pacific.....	317	914	1,176	1,664	28.6	41.5	82.0

* Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933. Source: Special tabulations of census data for 1910, 1920, and 1930.

† New England is excluded because three of the six states in this division have no incorporated villages, and two of the others very few. This is owing to the township system of municipal organization which exists there.

‡ Only Utah, New Mexico, Colorado, and Montana included.

national, 33.5 per cent. In five of the eight census divisions, it will be noted that the village rate was greater for the last decade, 1920 to 1930, than for the period 1910 to 1920, while in the West North Central and Mountain divisions there were sharp decreases in rates of growth during the last decade as compared with the first.

The next time a measure of growth or decline was made by following through the 8900 villages incorporated in 1910, a refinement was introduced to show trends by size of villages. Table 9 gives the number and per cent of villages growing or declining by as much as 1 per cent a year on the basis of the 1910 population, or 20 per cent in the twenty years, and carries the comparison by three size groups. "Small" villages were those from 250 to 1000 population; "medium" were those from 1000 to 1750; and "large" those from 1750 to 2500. One's attention is immediately drawn to the villages that fall into the central class, designated as relatively stationary; that is, not increasing or decreasing by more than 20 per cent in the twenty-year period. These are situations of relative stability, although the detailed figures show that gains outnumbered losses, even in this classification. It will be noted from the table that for every seven villages that declined 20 per cent or more in the whole period, there were thirty which increased 20 per cent or more. To be sure, the smaller villages did not exhibit so much tendency toward growth, but even among them only one census division showed as low a ratio as two villages growing to one declining.

Comparisons on the same plan were also made for the ten-year period between 1920 and 1930 and the results secured indicated practically the same trends as those for the entire twenty years.

Finally, a more detailed measure of growth or decline was employed for following through the 8900 villages incorporated in 1910. The amount of growth or decline was measured in terms of 100 person intervals, because it sometimes happens that the gain or loss of a single person may put a village into a growth or decline classification quite as readily as a gain or loss

TABLE 9. PROPORTION OF 8900 VILLAGES INCORPORATED BY 1910 GROWING, DECLINING, OR STATIONARY FROM 1910 TO 1930, BY DIVISION AND BY SIZE OF VILLAGE *

Census Division and Size of Village	Number of Villages	Per cent of Villages		
		Growing Over 20 per cent	Stationary From 20 per cent Growth to 20 per cent Decline	Declining Over 20 per cent
All divisions	8,900	30.5	62.3	7.2
Small... ..	6,321	26.9	65.4	7.7
Medium....	1,724	37.1	57.0	5.9
Large....	855	42.1	51.6	6.3
Middle Atlantic				
Small.	586	31.0	65.0	4.0
Medium....	265	47.2	50.9	1.9
Large.....	166	53.3	44.3	2.4
East North Central				
Small.	1,641	17.8	73.6	8.6
Medium.	437	21.5	69.8	8.7
Large.	198	25.3	67.7	7.0
West North Central				
Small ..	1,842	17.3	76.5	6.2
Medium... ..	354	24.3	71.2	4.5
Large.	167	30.0	61.0	9.0
South Atlantic				
Small... ..	865	43.2	50.1	6.7
Medium....	220	53.2	43.6	3.2
Large.	104	59.6	39.4	1.0
East South Central				
Small....	467	37.3	54.8	7.9
Medium.	130	49.2	45.4	5.4
Large....	59	50.8	45.8	3.4
West South Central				
Small.....	533	38.4	48.8	12.8
Medium.....	199	47.3	44.2	8.5
Large.	99	52.5	40.4	7.1
Mountain				
Small.	180	39.5	48.3	12.2
Medium.....	45	40.0	46.7	13.3
Large....	25	36.0	44.0	20.0
Pacific				
Small....	207	40.6	48.8	10.6
Medium....	74	56.8	35.1	8.1
Large.....	36	50.0	33.3	16.7

* Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933. Source: Special tabulations of census data for 1910 and 1930.

of 500 persons. Emphasis in this case was therefore on the amount of change, and the unit for comparison was 100 persons. For instance, if a village of between 450 and 550 persons in 1910 remained in that same range in 1920, or in 1930, it was placed in

a zero group. If it moved into the next larger class of 550 to 650, it was put into a +1 group; or, if it fell into the class below 350 to 450, it was counted in a -1 group and so on.¹

The summary of results from this type of measurement is that about one fourth (24.7 per cent) of the villages did not change — that is, they did not move from one 100 person category to another; about one half (51.9 per cent) moved up one or more hundreds, sometimes thousands; and about one fourth (23.4 per cent) fell into lower classes, in a majority of the cases to the 100 class just below. This would seem to be real evidence of growth tendencies on the part of the villages, or at least of their power to hold their own.

Since villages of less than 1000 population make up 71 per cent of all villages, special attention was given to them. It was also thought that perhaps those social and economic forces which might make for decline of population, would be most operative in such "small" villages. In 1910 there were 6321 villages of this class, and by 1930 there were still 30.1 per cent of them in the same 100 person class. One fourth dropped down one or more classes, but 45 per cent advanced. By similar comparison 70.8 per cent of the large villages ranging from 1750 to 2500, advanced one or more classes, while 7.0 per cent remained in the same class. Of the medium villages from 1000 to 1750, 62.3 per cent advanced and 12.4 per cent remained in the same class. It is evident, therefore, that small villages of less than 1000 population do not show as great tendencies toward growth as do the larger ones, but they seem to have, nevertheless, a certain vitality or at least the power to survive.

Agricultural villages show tendencies toward less growth but greater stability. A carefully selected sample of 140 agricultural villages, that is villages serving agricultural areas, were studied by the same methods or those employed for all the

¹ Tables and plats were made for villages in each state and for the years 1910 to 1920, 1920 to 1930, and 1910 to 1930. Space will not permit their inclusion here. Summaries by small, medium, and large village classes can be found in *Rural Social Trends*, opposite page 76. This type of table is used in the comparison of agricultural villages in the next part of this section of the chapter.

villages of the nation. The large majority of American villages are agricultural but some are industrial, some mining, or fishing, and others are suburban or resort villages; therefore, to observe the changes in the restricted sample of strictly agricultural villages proved highly significant.

The plan of plotting by 100 person intervals revealed that 28 of the 132 villages incorporated in 1910 stayed in the same class in 1930. There were 104 that changed, 17 of which fell one or more classes; 11 of the medium size went into the next class below. Of the 87 which moved up, 21 went into the class immediately above; 22 went up two classes; 15, three, and 29 advanced to still higher places. In Table 10 the detailed comparisons can be traced.

In terms of actual rate of growth for the decade 1920 to 1930, the percentages are as follows: the 140 agricultural villages, 8.6 per cent; the 28 Middle Atlantic villages, 11.0 per cent; the 30 Southern, 13.8 per cent; the 60 Middle-Western, 2.4 per cent; and the 22 Far Western, 15.5 per cent. It is evident, then, that agricultural villages do tend to grow, but this tendency is not so great as for all villages taken together. It should be noted, however, that agricultural villages manifest greater tendencies toward stability and toward maintaining their populations.

Question of Village Growth Answered. The question of village growth or decline is answered, therefore, in terms of a steady growth at about the general national rate of increase. Perhaps of equal, if not of greater significance, is the tendency toward decreasing rates of change, or what may be termed a greater relative stability. In about two fifths of all villages there was little population change between 1900 and 1920, and nearly two thirds of the small, and over one half of the others, remained in approximately the same classifications between 1910 and 1930. Villages with rapid change tendencies seem to be on the decline, and those of a more steady and established character appear to be on the increase. This conclusion gives small support to the theory that American villages or that agricultural villages are a disappearing, or even a declining, population group. To be sure, some are declining and even disappearing,

TABLE 10. NUMERICAL INCREASE AND DECREASE IN POPULATION FROM 1910 TO 1930 OF 132*
INCORPORATED VILLAGES †
(Groups of one hundred)

Population in 1910	Total	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
All villages.....	132																					
Towns.....	1	1																				
2,750-2,849..	1																					
Large villages..	14																					
2,450-2,499 ..	3																					
2,350-2,449 ..	2																					
2,250-2,349 ..	2																					
2,150-2,249 ..	2																					
2,050-2,149 ..																						
1,950-2,049 ..																						
1,850-1,949 ..																						
1,750-1,849 ..	7																					
Medium villages	55																					
1,650-1,749...	6																					
1,550-1,649 ..	4																					
1,450-1,549 ..	4																					
1,350-1,449 ..	10																					
1,250-1,349 ..	6																					
1,150-1,249 ..	9																					
1,050-1,149 ..	8																					
Small villages	59																					
950-999.....	6																					
850-949 ..	10																					
750-849 ..	13																					
650-749 ..	11																					
550-649 ..	7																					
450-549 ..	2																					
350-449 ..	2																					
250-349 ..	3																					
Hamlets.....	3																					
150-249 ..																						
0-149 ..																						

* 8 of the 140 villages were not incorporated in 1910.

† Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933. Source: Special tabulation of census data for 1910 and 1930.

but the evidence presented shows that hundreds grow while thousands hold their own along with general population trends.

Readjustments of the depression. The story for the years 1930 to 1936 is one of village growth and at more than twice the rate for the earlier period, 1924-1930. The larger villages and the towns, places of 2500 or more population, grew more than the smaller ones. There were migrations from farms, fewer emigrations from the villages, more full-time farmers living in the villages, and in some regions there was the movement from cities back to villages and towns.

In the Middle Atlantic region the increase in village population was definitely the result of loss of employment in industrial centers. Families moved to villages seeking lower living costs. In the South many influences were at work, such as mechanization of farms, displaced croppers looking for work, and families seeking relief or opportunity to qualify for government work projects. In the Middle West and Far West the drought areas sent people to villages. Better times for industry and for agriculture may change all this, but in the meantime villages are faced with many problems. A study of the population of Kansas suggests that villages and small towns are being subjected to considerable strain, but that there is little to support the idea that they are rapidly losing population and will eventually die out. A modified rural organization is emerging in which village and small town are assuming a somewhat different but still important rôle.¹

WHAT VILLAGERS DO, AND WHAT FUNCTIONS VILLAGES PERFORM

Agricultural villages are something more than aggregations of people struggling to "hold their own" in the census counts. Their ability to continue as villages is dependent upon their services. It must not be concluded from what has thus far been presented that the future of all villages is secure. It can be

¹ Clark, Carroll D., and Roberts, Roy L., *People of Kansas*, Kansas State Planning Board, Topeka, 1936.

said, however, that an opportunity for rendering needed services does exist. It has been all too easy in the past to define and classify places simply as "rural" or "urban" on the basis of their population. The more fundamental question is one of function, although, as has already been said, there is a relation between function and size.

The village, from the standpoint of function, is a sort of service station uniting the farm producer with the city consumer and linking the country consumer with the city producer. Dr. E. C. Branson, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, caricatured this idea by suggesting that a small town with prospects of growing sits upon a four-legged stool and that the legs of the stool are, first, farming and other country occupations which produce raw materials; second, manufacturing; third, trade and transportation; and fourth, banking. "It sits insecurely," he remarks, "if any one of these supports be infirm." Here and there, he warns, are to be found small towns trying to balance themselves on two-legged stools — a feat to which only acrobats are equal. Without an economic basis in either agriculture or manufacturing, they are teetering on only trading and banking, everyone trying to make a living by taking in everyone else's washing. Probably, if Dr. Branson could have lived to observe modern trends closely, he would have added a fifth leg to his stool, namely, a social basis of educational, recreational, religious, and welfare services. Such social functions may in the future prove to be quite as important as any of the other four legs. Evidence of this seems to be accumulating.

Six occupations characterize function of agricultural villages. About three fourths of the males and over two fifths of the females over 10 years of age in a selected sample of 177 agricultural villages were gainfully employed in 1930. Between 1920 and 1930 there was an increase of a little over 9 per cent for the number of males employed, and an increase of 21 per cent for the females employed. The types of occupation accounting for this gain among the women were domestic and personal service, which increased by 35 per cent; professional service, 25

per cent; clerical service, 25 per cent; and trade, 18 per cent.

The change in the ages of those employed is important. Every region shows a sharp decline for both sexes in the high school age, 15 to 19 years. School enrollment figures indicate that these young people were actually in school. Proportions have increased in the upper age register, beginning at 45 years, and extending even beyond 65 years.

Distribution of occupations, however, is most definitive of the functions or the roles which villages are playing in society, particularly in rural society. Measured in terms of total numbers, six occupations are of major importance and characterize agricultural villages rather definitely. They stand in the following order when the total numbers of gainfully employed men and women are considered: manufacturing, trade or merchandising, domestic and personal services, agriculture, professional service, and transportation. If professional, domestic, personal and clerical services are combined, surprisingly enough, the number so occupied almost equals the largest group, manufacturing, each having slightly over 26,000 persons. Tables 11 and 12 give the number gainfully employed in the agricultural villages specially studied, together with their distribution by sex, region, and type of occupation.

TABLE 11. GAINFULLY EMPLOYED MALES AND FEMALES, BY PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION — 177 VILLAGES *

Occupation	Males			Females		
	Number Employed		Per cent of Change	Number Employed		Per cent of Change
	1920	1930		1920	1930	
All occupations	63,244	69,030	+ 9.1	17,626	21,332	+ 21.0
Agriculture	9,968	8,931	- 10.4	480	488	+ 1.7
Manufacture†	22,041	23,519	+ 6.7	2,943	2,790	- 5.2
Transportation	7,447	8,713	+ 17.0	605	737	+ 10.8
Trade	12,736	14,872	+ 16.8	1,754	2,060	+ 18.0
Profession	3,965	4,068	+ 17.7	3,618	4,528	+ 25.2
Domestic and personal	3,093	3,868	+ 25.1	6,098	8,205	+ 34.6
Clerical‡	2,216	2,484	+ 12.1	1,939	2,425	+ 25.3
All other	1,778	1,975	+ 11.1	132	95	- 31.8

* Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

† By census definition manufacture includes all artisans like carpenters, masons, seamstresses, and the like as well as those employed in industrial plants.

‡ The clerical category was abandoned by the United States Census in 1930, clerical workers being distributed over the other major categories. These figures were obtained in connection with the special tabulation made for the 177 agricultural villages.

TABLE 12. DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED MALES AND FEMALES,*
BY REGION AND BY TYPE OF OCCUPATION — 177 VILLAGES †

Occupation	Percentage Distribution							
	Middle Atlantic		South		Middle West		Far West	
	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930
	Males							
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	8.9	6.2	17.0	15.6	13.8	9.7	23.3	19.9
Extraction of minerals	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.8	1.1	0.7	1.4
Manufacture	47.3	44.6	30.6	31.0	33.8	33.9	31.6	30.2
Transportation	11.7	13.8	11.3	11.1	12.0	13.8	12.0	11.7
Trade	17.1	18.4	22.5	22.8	22.0	23.6	16.7	19.3
Public service	1.4	1.3	2.5	2.5	1.8	1.9	1.5	1.7
Professional service	5.8	6.8	6.3	6.5	6.7	7.2	5.8	6.1
Domestic and personal service	3.7	4.4	5.3	6.1	5.0	5.5	5.1	6.0
Clerical	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.6	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.7
	Females							
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	0.7	0.5	6.1	5.0	0.8	0.7	3.1	2.1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1
Extraction of minerals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1
Manufacture	36.1	26.6	12.5	11.2	12.7	9.8	10.3	8.2
Transportation	3.7	3.4	2.2	2.2	4.6	4.4	4.9	3.9
Trade	6.6	8.2	7.7	7.2	11.8	11.6	13.8	12.5
Public service	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.7	1.0	0.6
Professional service	16.3	18.5	15.0	16.9	25.8	24.8	23.8	25.5
Domestic and personal service	24.9	29.2	49.2	49.7	30.4	35.0	29.2	34.1
Clerical	11.5	13.5	6.8	7.6	12.8	13.0	13.9	13.0

* Includes both white and Negro.

† Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

(1) *Manufacturing*. It may surprise some persons to find manufacturing at the top of the list of village occupations. This is at least partially accounted for by the rather inclusive census definition which includes such artisans as carpenters, masons, seamstresses, as well as those employed in industrial plants. The number of those employed in manufacturing has tended to decline slightly, as the table shows; however, it does maintain a very considerable lead over the others and represents in a real way one of the main services of the village.

A distribution of the types of manufacturing industries in the agricultural villages is significant, as an examination of Table 13 will show.

Industries connected with food assume a major importance and, moreover, an importance which increased in every region during the period studied. When the food group is combined with lumber, tobacco, textile groups, and with paper mills, they

total over 60 per cent, and hence their direct association with and dependence upon agriculture and forestry is quite evident.

TABLE 13. DISTRIBUTION OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, BY REGION AND BY TYPE OF INDUSTRY — 140 VILLAGES *

Type of Industry	Percentage Distribution									
	All regions		Middle Atlantic		South		Middle West		Far West	
	1924	1930	1924	1930	1924	1930	1924	1930	1924	1930
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Food and beverages	33.3	35.2	31.5	31.7	28.9	29.9	35.0	38.3	37.9	41.1
Textiles	3.4	4.5	7.6	7.2	3.4	6.6	1.7	3.3	0	0
Iron and steel	3.7	4.3	2.7	3.0	3.4	3.7	3.7	4.5	5.8	7.4
Lumber	14.1	14.0	18.5	21.5	22.9	20.4	7.5	8.2	11.7	6.3
Leather	1.1	0.8	3.8	1.8	0	0	0	0.8	0	0
Paper †	27.8	25.5	20.1	19.8	23.7	20.4	34.6	30.2	30.1	30.5
Chemicals	3.1	3.6	1.1	2.4	6.8	6.6	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.1
Stone	3.6	4.2	2.2	3.6	1.7	1.5	5.0	5.3	4.8	6.3
Tobacco	1.7	1.1	3.8	1.8	0	0	1.7	1.6	0	0
Transportation ‡	1.1	0.9	3.3	1.8	0.8	0	0	1.2	0	0
Miscellaneous	7.1	5.9	5.4	5.4	8.4	10.9	7.9	3.3	6.8	6.3

* Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

† Paper, according to census definition, includes newspaper and printing establishments as well as paper mills, of which there were only a few.

‡ Transportation includes equipment.

(2) *Trade or merchandising.* Trade showed the greatest tendency to increase its total number of employees, as well as its percentage when compared with the others in the decade 1920 to 1930. This is apparently some indication of growth and of the ability of villages to maintain themselves as retail trade centers in the face of greater urban competition. A later chapter will discuss the changes and trends in this merchandising function and in the institutions associated with it.

(3) *Domestic, personal, and professional services.* The increase in domestic, personal and professional employees is an important reflection of the increasing concentration within village centers of those institutions and services which are more and more needed by people living in the village and in its country community area. Schools, libraries, hospitals, and churches are, of course, examples of institutions that employ professional people, while the increase of such establishments as restaurants, beauty parlors, pressing and cleaning shops, and tourists' service places accounts for the definite increase of those in the personal services.

(4) *Agriculture.* The decrease of those employed in agriculture is probably not evidence that fewer farmers reside in the villages, but that there is a lessening demand for agricultural laborers because of the increasing use of machinery. In some regions it is probably due also to the fact that fewer farmers are retiring to live in the village and supervise the management of their farms from there. The difficulties arising out of the depression tend to keep families on their farms. Furthermore, it has been pointed out by those familiar with census materials that the 1930 counts were made in April, while the 1920 enumeration was in January; and, of course, more agricultural workers and operators are likely to be found in villages in January than in April.

(5) *Transportation.* Transportation is an excellent illustration of the function the village performs in rural society. Transportation agencies assemble for primary processing of food products and raw materials destined for local or distant consumption and then transport them to other manufacturing centers or to city wholesalers and retailers. In reverse process transportation agencies bring to the village for distribution those things needed for local consumption or required in farming, merchandising, and manufacturing.

Variations and changes — A trend toward specialization. Many variations of the service or occupational relationships of villages are to be found; variations in size, growth, distance from cities, and geographic regions. Village functions are changing; they are constantly making imperative readjustments. The trend of the whole process seems to be toward specialization, each village finding it advantageous to discover its niche in rural society and then to organize its life accordingly.

Variations by size of village center and its location are noticeable. Many villages under one thousand population, except in the Far West, have fewer males employed in manufacturing and more in agriculture than formerly. For women there are fewer opportunities in domestic and personal services, except again in the Far West, but more opportunities in the

professional services. As might be expected, the smaller places have more artisans than industrial employees.

Variations in the number and kind of service agencies are also evident. The four accompanying charts give the picture graphically. In the case of New York, the villages of the 750 to 1249 class have in addition to the economic agencies, found in classes of smaller size, on the average, one mill or feed store, one confectionery store, one more bank, and one factory.

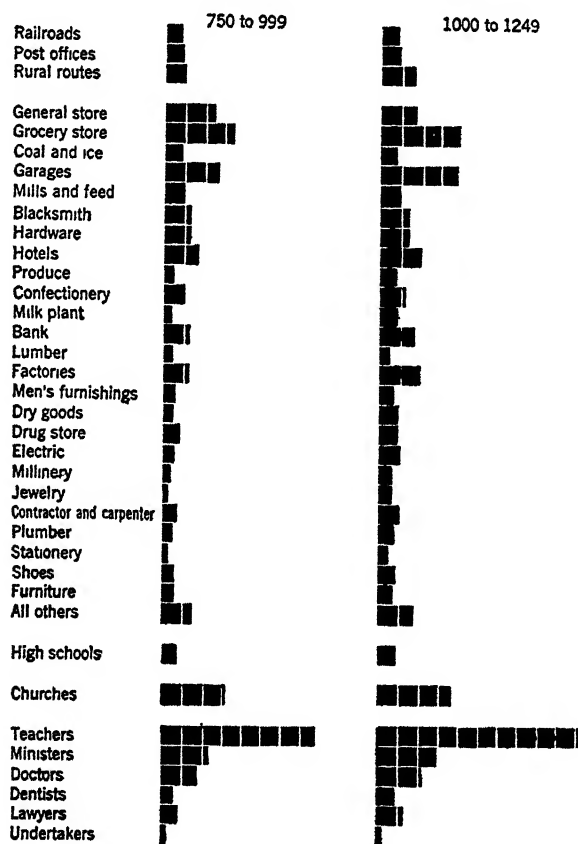


FIG. 7. ECONOMIC AGENCIES AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN TWO CLASSES OF VILLAGES, 750 TO 999 AND 1000 TO 1249

Source: Melvin, Bruce L., *Village Service Agencies, New York, 1925*. Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, Bulletin 493, August, 1929.

Villages of the 1750 to 2249 class, besides having the same stores as the smaller places, are likely to have also a furniture store, a paint store, a florist, a bakery, and other similar agencies which give definite indications of specialization of functions.

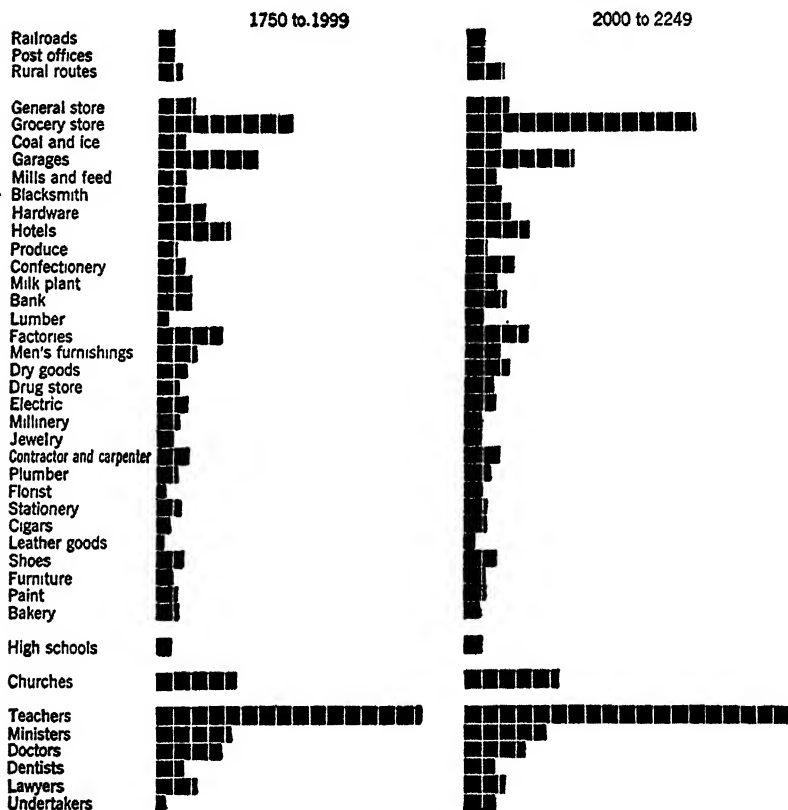


FIG. 8. ECONOMIC AGENCIES AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN TWO CLASSES OF VILLAGES, 1750 TO 1999 AND 2000 TO 2249

Source: Melvin, Bruce L., *Village Service Agencies*, New York, 1925. Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, Bulletin 493, August, 1929.

In slightly different form, the relation of size of town to number of merchandising concerns per village can be seen by the graph representing a local situation in Wisconsin. In places of less than 300 population, you may expect only two general stores, but the number of such stores rises until the 1000 popula-

tion class is reached, then tends to drop rather sharply. In contrast, grocery stores show a slow rise in numbers until the 2000 mark is reached, then they mount rapidly. They are probably smaller, more specialized, and more widely distributed.

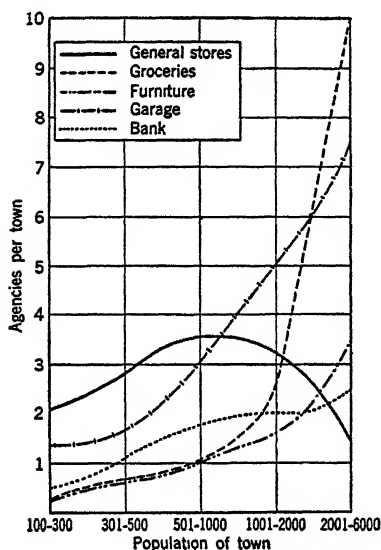


FIG. 9. RELATION OF SIZE OF TOWN TO NUMBER OF MERCHANDISING CONCERNS PER TOWN

Source: Kolb, J. H., *Service Relations of Town and Country*, Research Bulletin 58, December, 1923, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

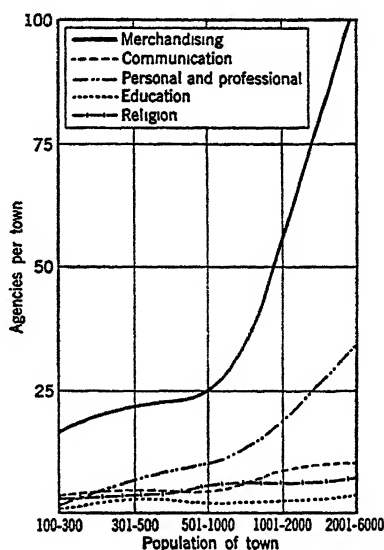


FIG. 10. RELATION OF SIZE OF TOWN TO NUMBER OF SERVICE AGENCIES PER TOWN COMPARED BY TYPES

Source: Kolb, J. H., *Service Relations of Town and Country*, Research Bulletin 58, December, 1923, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Another chart can be drawn by including other types of service agencies such as those for communication, personal and professional services, education and religion, and comparing them with a combined merchandising curve. Merchandising agencies skyrocket at 1500 population, while personal and professional agencies rise slowly after the 2000 mark is reached. The 300 class must be reached before a high school can be expected. By contrast, the curves for other agencies remain on a level and parallel each other.

Those villages among the 140 selected for special study which were growing more rapidly than the national rate of 16.1 per cent from 1920 to 1930 had a slightly larger proportion,

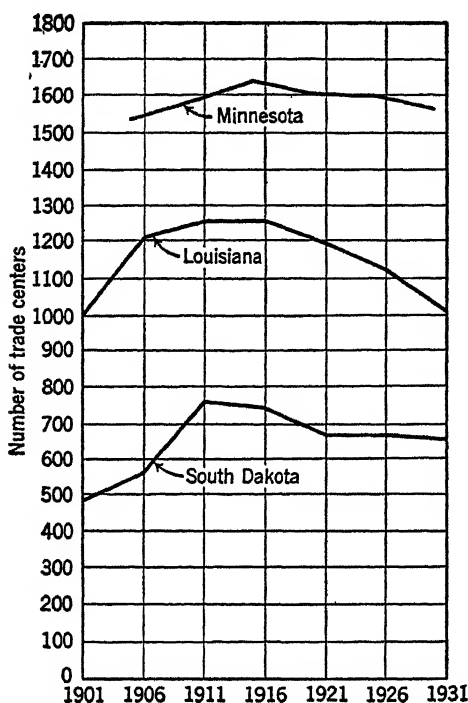


FIG. II. THE TREND IN GROWTH AND DECLINE OF TRADE CENTERS IN THREE STATES, 1901-1931

Source: Landis, Paul H., *The Growth and Decline of South Dakota Trade Centers, 1901-1931*, South Dakota State College, Brookings, South Dakota, Bulletin 279, April, 1933.

especially of females, employed in manufacturing, and a smaller proportion in trade and transportation. This is only another way of saying that industrial establishments seem to be associated with growth.

Variation in distances of villages or small towns from cities is also of significance. In the 140 sample there was an increase in the number of industries in all villages which were located beyond a fifty-mile zone from cities, especially cities ranging from 10,000 to 25,000 in population. There was also a net gain of industries per village in this zone between 1924

and 1931. In the zones under 25 miles and in those 25 to 50 miles from cities, a net loss was found during the same period.

Variations in number and type of service agencies over periods of time can likewise be observed from local state studies which were made on comparable bases. A combined chart shows the trend in the growth and the decline of the number of trade centers for Minnesota, Louisiana, and South Dakota, for the thirty-year period, 1901 to 1931.

For Minnesota, it was found that the number of trade centers in the state as a whole had increased between 1905 and 1931, but that in the older parts of the state the number tended to decrease. Real decline was experienced by centers with a population of less than 500 people. In all trade centers under 2500 in 1905 and existing until 1930, one half had grown in size, one fourth declined, and one fourth remained practically stationary.¹

For Louisiana one interesting conclusion is that the small village centers were specializing in certain types of services; medium size villages in others, and the largest in still others. In a thirty-year period ending in 1931, this division of labor had become more and more evident. Small centers nearest the farms were no longer attempting to provide all services and were concentrating their attention upon enterprises for which their location gave them comparative advantage, such as agencies for supplying the immediate and the more or less undifferentiated needs, and agencies for the processing of farm products. The more highly differentiated or specialized functions tended to drift to larger places. Even some forms of social activities were reported to be increasingly organized around the larger trade centers.²

For South Dakota a corroborating conclusion with regard to social activities and functions appears. The trade center successful in developing a variety of attractive social institutions undoubtedly gained an advantage in the present motor age such as it never possessed in the days of the horse and buggy. Such a center attracts people from a very wide range, for, with an automobile, the rural family is likely to go to that trade center which has the most magnets extended in its direction; motion-picture theaters, swimming pools, high schools and fairs: community organizations that recognize rural leadership and attempt rural co-operation.³

¹ Lively, C. E., Bulletin 287, *Growth and Decline of Farm Trade Centers in Minnesota, 1905-1930*, Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, St. Paul, July, 1932.

² Smith, T. Lynn, *Farm Trade Centers in Louisiana, 1901 to 1931*, Louisiana State University Bulletin 234, January, 1933.

³ Landis, Paul H., *The Growth and Decline of South Dakota Trade Centers, 1901-1933*, Agricultural Experiment Station, South Dakota State College, Brookings, Bulletin 279, April, 1933.

An ingenious way of showing graphically changes in types of agencies by time periods is found in the report of a study of

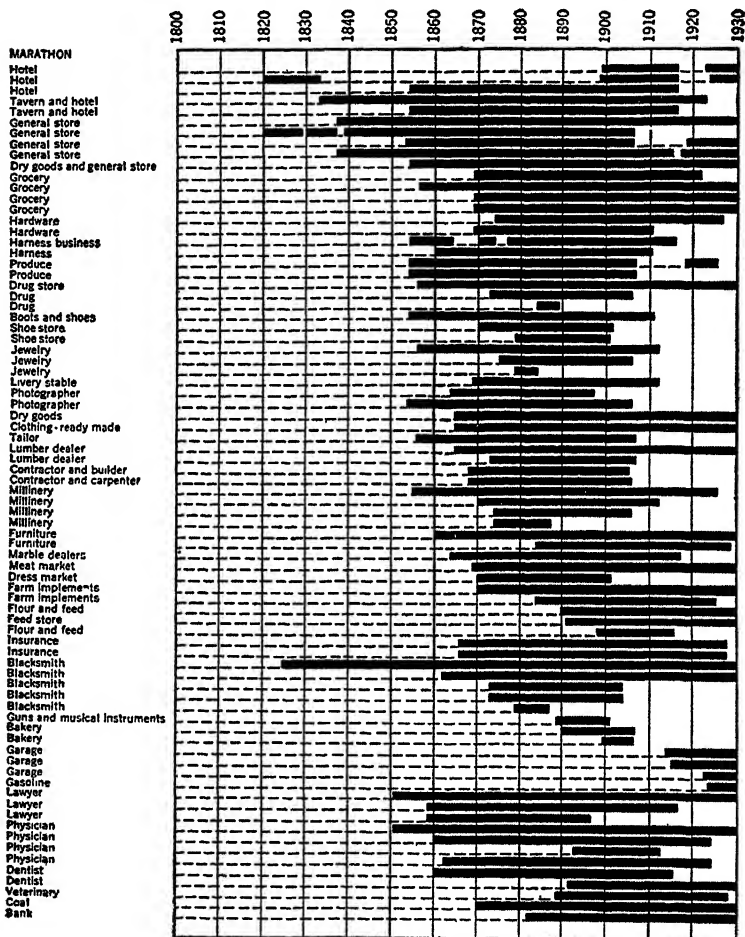


FIG. 12. DURATION PERIODS OF THE VARIOUS BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS IN MARATHON

Source: Melvin, Bruce L., *The Sociology of a Village and the Surrounding Territory*, Bulletin 523, May, 1931, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, New York.

Marathon, New York. Certain types of functions seem to be associated with certain periods in the life of this village of 955

souls, located fourteen miles from Cortland and thirty miles from Ithaca.¹

Differentiation in the types of business concerns in Marathon is illustrated by the rise of grocery stores. The general stores sold groceries until the 1860's, but in 1870 there were four which sold nothing else. From 1886 to 1905 there was greatest stability and prosperity in the village, judged by the prevalence of a wide diversity of service agencies. From 1905 to 1930 there was a decrease in the number of general stores and the establishment of more specialized stores in response to demands of modern living. Such types as millinery, jewelry, and shoe stores, however, tended to disappear; they could not continue to compete with cities.

Such then are the origins, the holding power, the role, and the changing characteristics of the village or small town group in rural society — one hand extending toward the country and the other toward the city. Its country relationships will be examined first, represented by what will be termed the "town-country or rural community."

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Sketch the stages of development and changes through which some village or small town with which you are personally acquainted, has gone.
2. Account for the fact that village and open-country neighborhood settlement occurred separately in the Middle West.
3. Describe the New England and the Southern form of group settlement and organization.
4. Make a list of all incorporated places in your home county, indicate gains or losses in population of each for the decades from 1910 to 1920 and 1920 to 1930. Is there any tendency for growth or decline to be associated with certain sizes of places? Explain.
5. Discuss the pro or the con of the proposition: "The advantages of village life seem to be so great that its disadvantages would not appear by comparison to be of much weight." (Sims, *Elements of Rural Sociology, Revised Edition*, p. 146.)

This topic may be presented before the class in the form of a debate or a discussion.

¹ Melvin, Bruce L., *The Sociology of a Village and the Surrounding Territory*, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, Bulletin 523, May, 1931.

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CHAPTER V

THE RURAL COMMUNITY

EVERY farmer's gate opens onto a road and that road leads to a village or town. Because of this web of communication and transportation, there is an intermesh of town and country relationships. Just as the country looks increasingly to the village or town for many services, such as education, recreation, and merchandising, and just as the village or town is more and more depending upon the country for trade, raw materials, and patronage of its institutions, so the two in this reciprocal relation are becoming the town-country community of modern rural society.

As a matter of fact, many social trends which are developing in rural life today are closely linked with the whole question of village stability or growth which was considered in the last chapter, and with this growing interdependence of village or town with country. The areas of social, business, and educational contacts are expanded beyond neighborhood boundaries. Farmers and villagers are mingling as citizens of a larger community. This has fundamental importance for many of the movements which are to be discussed in later chapters. We shall consider, for example, the consolidation of country schools, the leadership of high schools, the reorganization of retail merchandising through principles of specialization, and the institution of the larger parish plan for churches by use of this town-country community idea.

America is becoming an older country; the frontier escape is no longer possible, and the result is a necessity for group organization and social planning which will make that mature life more satisfying. This emerging community which encompasses both town and country has many possibilities; hence we shall, in this chapter, focus our attention on a careful analysis of community areas and relationships. With the

opening of the West under the Homestead Act, the method of settlement was largely on separate farms in neighborhood groups, as explained in a previous chapter. Villages and towns sprang up as business and institutional centers. Finally the integration of these two elements of rural society began.

THE COMMUNITY IDEA

It was some little time after the actual formation of such communities that students of rural society began to study and talk about this community idea. Writers in the general field of sociology had used the term "community" in the more general sense of association or solidarity or identification of interests. For example, Dr. Small used "community" and "solidarity" practically synonymously. It is "the common relation of all parts," he said.¹

Park and Burgess, on the other hand, define the concept more nearly in the terms to be used in this chapter. "Community is the term," they say, "which is applied to societies and social groups where they are considered from the point of view of the geographical distribution of the individuals and the institutions of which they are composed."²

One of the first, if not the very first, student of rural society to write about this emerging rural community of country and village or town was Dr. Warren H. Wilson. He described the community in terms of a "team haul."

People in the country think of the community [he said] as that territory with its people, which lies within the team haul of a given center.... Social customs do not proceed further than the team haul. Imitation, which is an accepted mode of social organization, does not go farther in the country than the customary drive with horse and wagon.... The team haul which defines the community is a radius within which men buy and sell.... It is the radius of social intercourse. Within this radius of the team haul families are accustomed to visit with ten times the frequency with which they

¹ Small, A. W., *General Sociology*, p. 582. University of Chicago Press, 1905.

² Park and Burgess, *An Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, p. 161. University of Chicago Press.

pass outside the radius.... The community is the larger social whole outside the household; a population complete in itself for the needs of its residents.... It is a man's home town.¹

The idea of self-sufficiency assumed in many definitions led to an over-emphasis upon the community as a sort of mutually exclusive group. Dr. Butterfield, for example, warned against a possible confusion of "neighborhood" and "community."

A neighborhood [he said] is simply a group of families living conveniently near together.... A true community is a social group that is more or less self-sufficing. It is big enough to have its own centers of interest — its teaching center, its social center; its own church, its own schoolhouse, its own Grange, its own library and to possess such other institutions as the people of the community need.²

It remained for Dr. Galpin to invent a method for locating and mapping the rural community area, to coin the term "rurban" for its description, and to present an analysis of the community group as an interrelationship of town and country people together with their institutions. The following paragraph is recognized as a classic statement of the community idea in rural society:

It is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid the conclusion that the trade zone about one of these rather complete agricultural civic centers forms the boundary of an actual, if not legal, community, within which the apparent entanglement of human life is resolved into a fairly unitary system of interrelatedness. The fundamental community is a composite of many expanding and contracting feature communities possessing the characteristic pulsating instability of all real life.³

Dr. Galpin made his first community study in Walworth County, Wisconsin, but the origin of the idea goes back to an earlier survey of Belleville, Jefferson County, New York.

¹ Wilson, Warren H., *The Evolution of the Country Community*. Pilgrim Press.

² *Mobilizing the Rural Community*, Ex. Bulletin 23, Massachusetts Agricultural College, 1918; p. 6 of Introduction.

³ Galpin, C. J., *The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community*, p. 18. Research Bulletin 34, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, 1918.

When, as a young man, he was teaching in the academy there, he undertook a survey of the surrounding agricultural community. In reporting this study before the first Wisconsin Rural Life Conference in the spring of 1911, he said:

This stretch of land impressed me with its solid social front, with its variety of social activities, with its real progress made by the voluntary association of many small amounts of surplus labor and capital, and I decided to map the social topography of this whole community, at least as far as it was definitely organized, in order that I might discover the clue to its solidarity.

It was found that twenty-seven organizations center in the village.... No organizations except district schools were found in the open country. Village and open farming country form a community of homes which seems to be a sort of social drainage basin beyond whose border every home drains off into some other basin.

The big discovery of this survey is the fact of a real rural community and also pretty clearly the area of this community with its bounding lines. It appears that this community takes in parts of four townships, and ignores in its social dealings the voting precincts set by law.¹

The beginning of this idea of spatial arrangements of social phenomena can thus be seen in the early Belleville study, but the technique for presenting it was revised and greatly improved in the Walworth County study, in which the publication of striking maps, showing the community relations of the twelve centers, attracted wide attention.

The growth of the "trade area" idea, so far as I see it now, was something like this [Dr. Galpin said later in personal correspondence]. Belleville, a country village of 500 population, was a center of store trade since 1815. Farmers were constantly coming to town to buy and sell. In 1828, when the farmers established an academy, they wanted a convenient place for it. What was more natural than the place their roads led to, and to which they constantly drove? In 1870, when they established a Grange, what was more natural than to have it where they traded and where they schooled their high school children. In 1880, when they established a co-operative creamery (largest then in the United States, I believe), what more natural than to place this also in Belleville. I observed the magnetic relation of trade, barter,

¹ *Country Life Conference*, Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, Series no. 472, General Series 308, February, 1911.

buying, selling. I came to believe that trade was a primary relationship which determined many other relationships. And, I always said that the Academy strengthened all these trade relationships. Naturally the spatial element came to the fore, as the large majority of social contacts of the farmers radiated to one center.

Thus the map became the means for analysis, and "rurban," a contraction or amalgam of "rural" and "urban," a graphic descriptive term. But perhaps a point which is implicit in the foregoing description will bear re-emphasis; namely, that in studying any rural community, we must consider not only its physical boundaries, or locality, but also the functions which gives it its life as a group. It is the fusing of the geographic or ecological and the psychological or functional elements which gives the community idea its real power and usefulness. To follow this in analysis is not always easy for, unlike the village, the town-country or rural community does not have such an easily recognizable physical base or a definite corporate boundary. Nor are its social functions integrated and united by political organization to the same extent as in the village. In the rural community, associations and social contacts are more voluntary; that is, people are drawn together by common interests of trade or education, recreation or religion. It is a community of interests, but all interests need not be coterminous. Despite the process of specialization detailed in the previous chapter on the village, there is, nevertheless, a coincidence or a grouping of functions and interests, as the next section of this chapter will demonstrate. Similarly there is a central core which can be considered the community group. The most recent and satisfactory definition arising out of careful analysis of modern rural life as well as a detailed tracing of the older forms of group living, reads as follows: "A rural community consists of the social interaction of the people and their institutions in the local area in which they live on dispersed farmsteads and in a hamlet or village which forms the center of their common activities."¹

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *The Rural Community*, p. 481. The Natural History of a Sociological Group. Ginn & Co., 1932.

The locality phase and the interest phase are thus brought together. It may be a little more or a little less of the one or the other. One community may represent an area easily recognized and well defined, with the social interactions of its people rather weak or sluggish. Another may have a high degree of social integration, but its boundaries may be none too clear. Patterns of service areas and the activities which take place within them will be the order of further discussion in this chapter.

PATTERNS OF TOWN-COUNTRY COMMUNITY AREAS

Any tracing of the interest or institutional affiliations of a farm population soon leads to the village or small town as the center of a community made up of a fairly definite land area. Country people in this area are more closely tied to the center and more definitely related to its people than they are to farm groups beyond the community area, or to more distant centers. Dr. Galpin describes the relationship in the following simile:

The relation of the land to its center is similar to that of hub to wheel. The wheel needs its hub and the hub is useless without its wheel. Rurbanism asks why more democracy cannot unite farm and village in the same community when replanning institutions for the people on the land, seeing that the currents of life among these two groups constantly flow together.¹

Thus the general pattern of the town-country community is circular. A few service areas will now be presented by the use of maps, and changes which have taken place in recent years will be noted. Then a summary of community relationships will be made by the use of a conventionalized diagram.

Town and country interdependence shown by community areas. The first maps to call definite attention to this increasing interdependence of town and country people were those of Walworth County, Wisconsin. The generalized trade area map is shown first. In the original study there followed a series of separate maps showing the various areas for such

¹ Galpin, C. J., *Rural Social Problems*, Fourth Wisconsin Country Life Conference, Serial no. 711, General Series 515, University of Wisconsin, 1914.

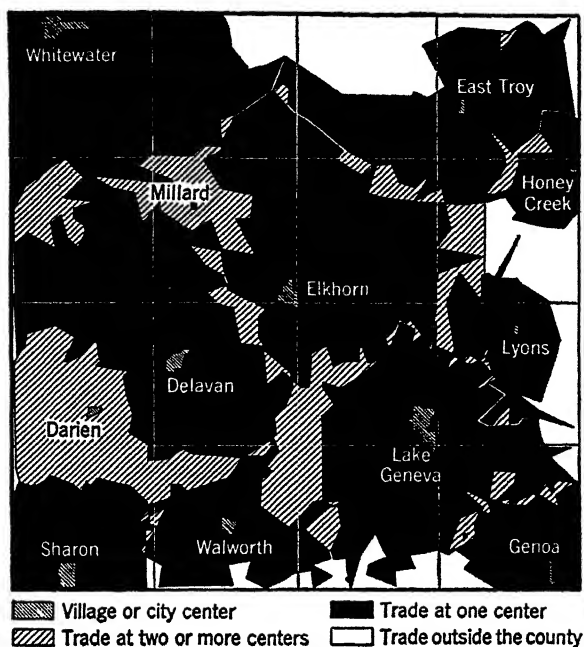


FIG. 13. TRADE COMMUNITIES

Twelve villages and small cities situated in the county serve as trade centers for the farm homes precisely as for the village and city homes, and all the homes trading at the same center form a trade community. Township lines six miles apart indicate the distance.

Source: Galpin, C. J., *The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community*, Research Bulletin 34, May, 1915, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

services as banking, newspaper circulation, milk marketing, churches, high school and library. Some of the maps were grotesque in appearance because part of the county might not be included in any of the service areas.

The maps of high-school areas show that some of the farm territory was not served by any high school, or, to state it in reverse terms, some farm children were not attending high school. Likewise, some of the twelve village centers did not possess a high school; therefore, the service area from another center approached it very closely. Thus, the influence of differentiation or specialization which was stressed in the previous chapter can be observed.

Changes have come with the passing of years. Sixteen years after the original study was made a restudy was undertaken,

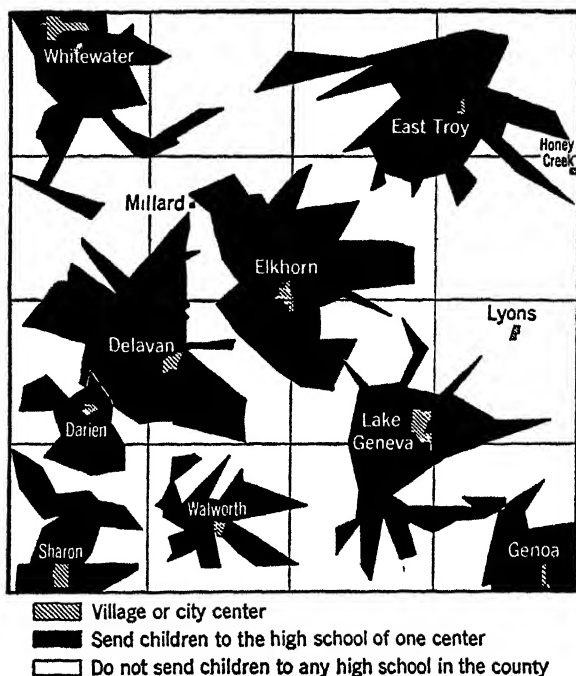


FIG. 14. HIGH-SCHOOL COMMUNITIES IN WALWORTH COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Notice the fact that the trade-center high school is used by farmer and villager alike; that there are wide farm-land areas making no use of the high school. Compare with township areas.

Source: Galpin, C. J., *The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community*, Research Bulletin 34, May, 1935, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

following original methods as closely as possible. Expansion was found to mark the general trend of the changes in service areas when the seven services for each of the twelve centers were carefully compared. No one center, of course, expanded all its areas, but the general expansion took place because of three things: first, there was a more complete coverage of the county, suggesting a greater use of village services and institutions by country people; second, there were encroachments of the larger centers into territory formerly served by small neighborhood or hamlet centers; and third, there was a very appreciable increase in the overlapping of service areas of two or more centers. The library area increased most while banking and drygoods areas expanded least.

TABLE 14. NET CHANGES IN THE SEVEN SERVICE AREAS FOR THE TWELVE CENTERS, 1913-1929

Service area by name of center	Net Changes in per cent							
	Total	Library	Milk Marketing	High School	Groceries	Churches	Dry Goods	Banking
Whitewater...	48.2	143.3	121.2	190.2	8.5	25.9	- 2.1	39.1
Delavan...	4.7	128.9	23.1	29.4	- 18.2	10.0	- 24.1	- 9.8
Lake Geneva...	13.9	19.2	48.1	65.7	- 2.0	36.3	7.7	- 13.0
Elkhorn...	38.5	70.9	151.7	40.0	84.9	- 13.7	13.7	13.2
Walworth...	17.0	....	74.7	79.2	- 5.5	39.1	- 7.2	11.7
East Troy...	49.2	100.0	111.8	5.1	110.3	- 40.6	115.7	5.6
Sharon...	27.8	100.0	37.2	33.3	5.3	100.0	- 14.9	- 14.2
Genoa City...	14.5	100.0	44.8	- 51.5	6.4	72.5	- 8.6	- 11.2
Darien...	30.7	100.0	- 5.0	24.0	20.9	25.4	7.2	26.3
Lyons...	6.1	....	73.5	....	14.3	12.0	- 10.8	- 19.5
Honey Creek...	7.5	....	21.1	..	6.9	114.5	15.4	- 4.8
Millard...	61.4	..	- 100.0	..	200.0	54.5	..	...
Total	25.8	143.3	63.7	48.7	22.4	11.0	6.5	3.1

The size of the area is expressed in square miles. The expansion and contraction figures are arrived at by comparing the two sets of maps showing the situations in 1913 and in 1929. The net change in per cent is actually a growth ratio for the sixteen-year period and it is calculated by adding the expansion and the contraction figures algebraically and then dividing by the area figure in 1913. The resultant can therefore be expressed as a percentage.

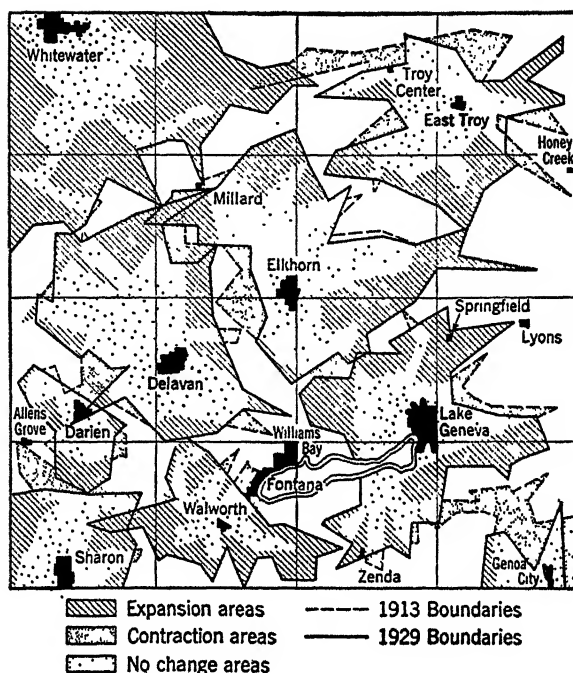


FIG. 15. CHANGES IN THE HIGH-SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS

Source: Kolb and Polson, *Trends in Town-Country Relations*, Research Bulletin 117, September, 1933, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

An examination of the whole set of Walworth County maps shows that many service areas are not very different from what they were sixteen years before. The majority of the changes appear at or near the borders of the old areas, as may be observed on the high-school map, leaving the comparatively large central portions about the larger centers relatively unchanged.

In the studies of the 140 agricultural villages, the community boundary in each case was drawn to include that area from which a majority of the country people came for a majority of their services, such for example, as retail trade, education, or marketing. The boundary line might or might not represent exactly the area of any one or more services. Rather it represents what might be regarded as the modal situation

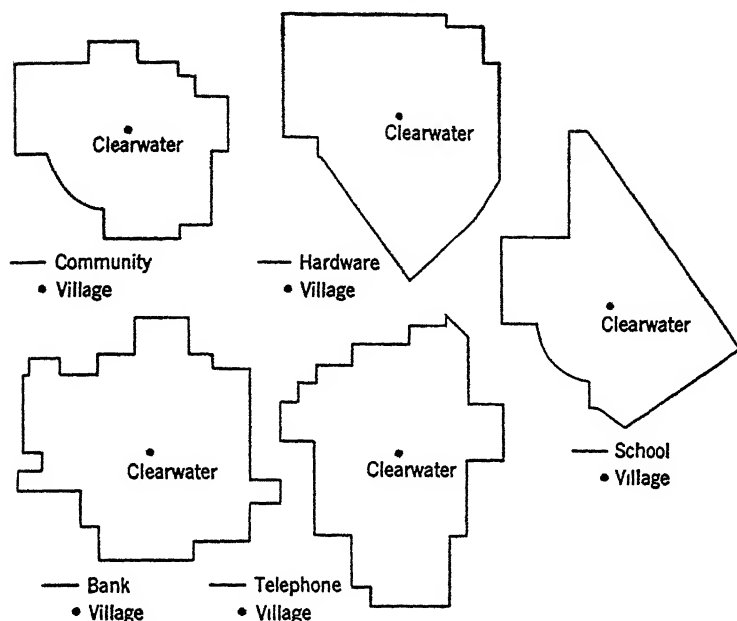


FIG. 16. VARIATION BETWEEN VARIOUS SERVICE AREAS AND COMMUNITY AREA FOR ONE VILLAGE

The small maps show the areas of service which do not coincide with the community boundaries. These can be compared with the general community map.

Source: Brunner, Hughes, Patten, *American Agricultural Villages* Doran Company, 1927.

with which any particular service area can then be compared. The extent to which special service areas may vary from the general community area is well illustrated in the case of Clearwater.

Changes in community areas drawn according to the "majority" definition were found in the restudies. Nearly one third of the community areas had increased significantly between 1930 and 1936. In the Middle West region the increases were above this average. In all of the other regions they fell below it. The larger villages expanded their areas somewhat more than did the others.

Trade areas were more difficult to determine in 1936 than in the former years of study, except for such special services as hardware or banking. General retail trade tended to be more scattered, and the areas for any one village were less definite.

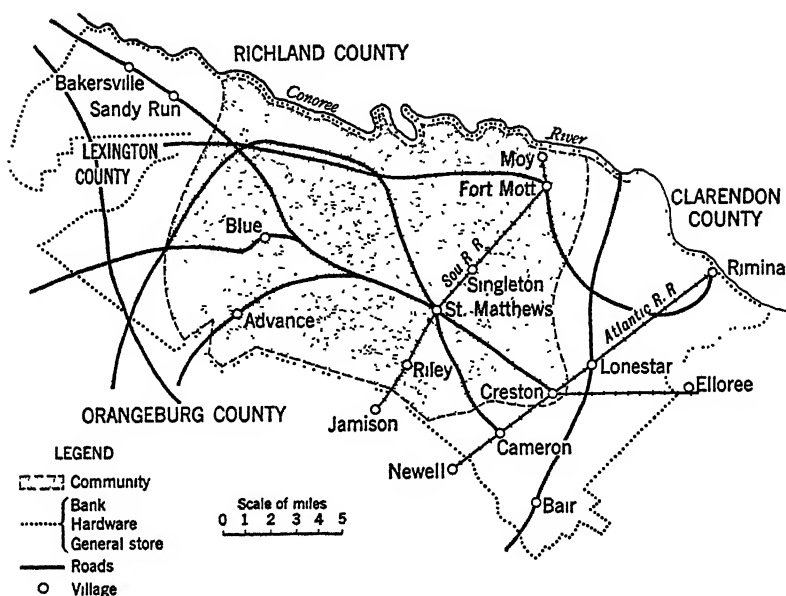


FIG. 17. A SOUTHERN COUNTY-SEAT COMMUNITY

The combination of a large population and possession of the county seat has given St. Matthews a very large community area. Its banks exceed even this area and serve the entire county. County lines are, however, effective barriers. Though a neighboring county forces a wedge into St. Matthews County, its banks do not draw many people from the other side of the county lines. Note, too, how all roads lead to the village.

Source: Brunner, Hughes, Patten, *American Agricultural Villages*. Doran Company, 1927.

Areas for regular social and recreation services were more clearly defined than in the earlier years, but they continued to be somewhat smaller than the general trade area. The high school was increasingly important as a determinant of the community area. More than any other single service, its area was likely to coincide with the general community boundary. The importance of this for community organization and planning will be discussed in the chapter on community organization.

A Southern county-seat town and community is St. Matthews, a relatively large center with a large community area. The banking area, however, extends even beyond the community area. County boundaries are important in setting the limits of the community area, and highways converging at the center do much to extend as well as to consolidate the area.

Exceptions to the wheel or circular pattern can be found in certain of the regions where farms, roads, and county lines are laid out in straight lines and at right angles because there are few topographical interferences. The case of Alta, Iowa, is an illustration in point.

In southeastern Whiteman County, in the State of Washington, two types of centers and trade areas are indicated on the accompanying map (Fig. 19). The small areas are those of smaller centers. It should be observed that the smaller areas lie completely within the trade areas of the larger centers.

It is interesting to find similar patterns of town or village service relationships in other countries also. Comparable studies have not been made in many foreign countries, but in those where such mapping has been done, corresponding patterns seem to prevail.

The case of the retail shopping areas of Leeds and Bradford of West Yorkshire, England (Fig. 20), is a very interesting example. Two types of retail shopping areas, namely, market-day customers' areas and seasonal customers' areas, are arranged in

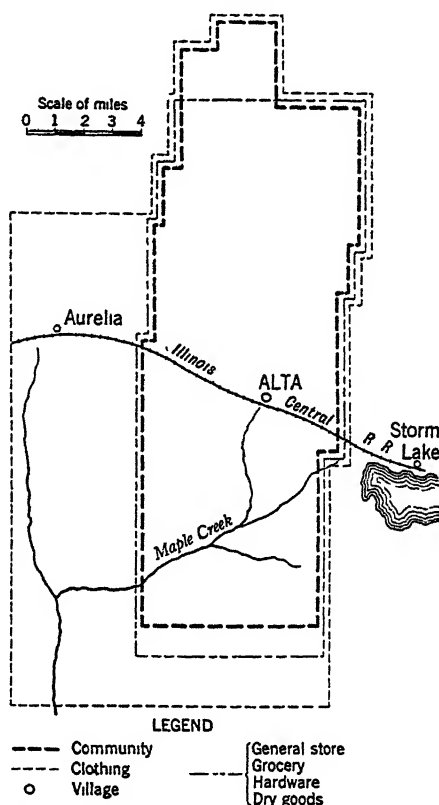


FIG. 18. COINCIDENCE OF COMMUNITY AND SERVICE AREAS

Alta, Iowa, in its various service areas, illustrates how closely these areas can correspond to the community boundaries. The map also shows the rectangular type of community common in the Middle West, where farms are laid out by quarter sections, and where most roads run due North and South or East and West because of the absence of topographical features.

Source: Brunner, Hughes, Patten, *American Agricultural Villages*. Doran Company, 1927.

concentric circles about the center, Leeds. Bradford is a smaller center and maintains a secondary position in the large area, but has a smaller area of its own.

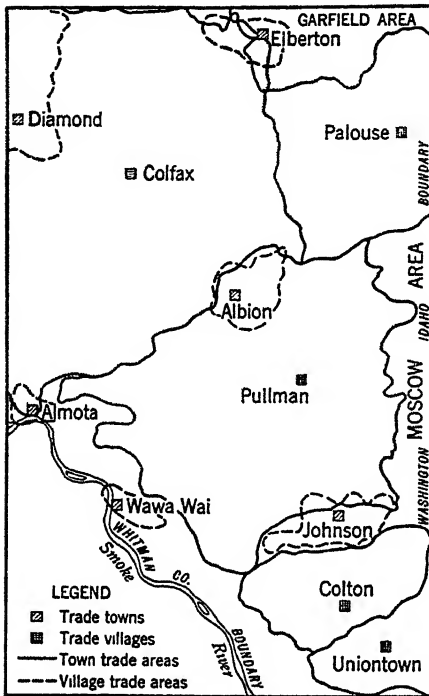


FIG. 19. TRADE AREAS, SOUTHEASTERN WHITMAN COUNTY

It will be observed that smaller trade areas lie completely within those of the larger centers.

Source: Taylor and Yoder, *Rural Social Organization in Whitman County*, Bulletin 203, June, 1926, State College of Washington, Agricultural Experiment Station, Pullman.

A pattern of similar design can be found even in China where residences are clustered in small villages, but, as the map shows (Fig. 21), there is also the market town with its large market and trade institutions, its large temple, its new school, and its railway station. Yao Hwa Men, a market town, is the community center for seventy-two small farm villages. Farmers bring their eggs to the center each market day and use them in exchange for the goods they need. Grain is sold at the grain shop for money. Each farm village has its own worship place and the local temples are the centers for religious ac-

tivities, but the large worship area covers a radius of 20 li and the villagers make an annual pilgrimage to the larger temple at the community center.

Another type of community area takes into account, in addition to the extent of service relationships, the frequency of service contacts. A village frequency area is defined as one within which the majority of farm families go most often to the local center. The map of Wayne County, New York (Fig. 22), shows this kind of area.

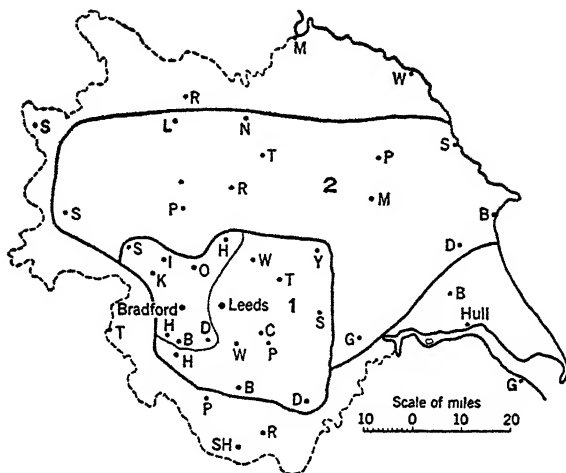


FIG. 20. RETAIL SHOPPING AREAS OF LEEDS AND BRADFORD, ENGLAND

1. Market Day Customers' Area.

2. Seasonal Customers' Area, mainly shopping at Leeds.

Source: Dickinson, R. E., *The Regional Functions and Zones of Influence of Leeds and Bradford*. Reprinted from *Geography*, September, 1930.

Similar to the "extent" area, the "frequency" area varies in size with the population of the village and the types of service institutions. For the centers 1000-9999 in population, more than nine out of every ten farm families in the area designate it as the center most frequented. For centers 100-499 in size, the ratio falls to slightly more than seven out of every ten, which means, obversely, that nearly three out of ten living in the area go elsewhere more frequently. The distance traveled is 3.4 miles further than would be traveled in going to the local center, but the trips are almost nine fewer per month, so that the actual distances traveled are only about 40 per cent greater.

One further measurement of town and country, center and circumference, can be made. Not only is the extent and frequency of contacts important, but also the intensity with which a center serves its tributary territory. Zones of concentration of service can be indicated, in order to determine the drawing power of the center. This could be done by using a system of indices or gradients, the gradients being drawn from

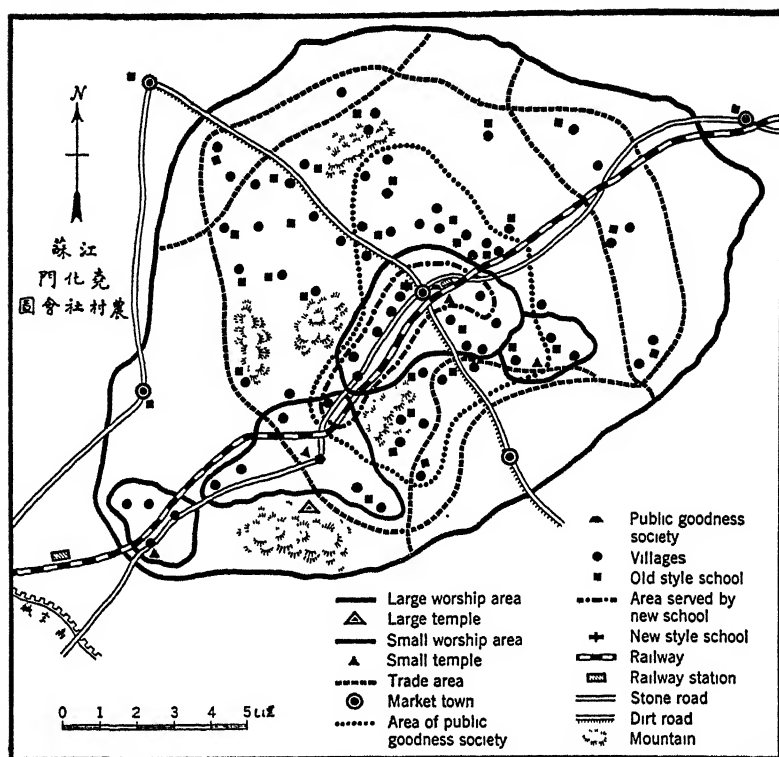


FIG. 21. SERVICE AREAS OF YAO HWA MEN, NEAR NANKING, CHINA

The scale of the map is indicated by Chinese li. Each division indicates one Chinese li. By using this scale, the distances may be measured from the market center to the different villages.

Source: Chiao Chi Ming, *Mapping the Rural Community*, Miscellaneous Series 4, December, 1924. University of Nanking, College of Agriculture and Forestry, Nanking, China.

the center to the circumference of the service or community area. It might even be shown by use of contours of varying levels.

Variation in areas associated with type of service and size of center. Just as variations exist in the functions and occupations of the village itself, so differences in size of service areas are found associated with the various kinds of services performed and with the population of the village.

By the process of differentiation and specialization, made possible by the greatly increased communication and transportation facilities to which repeated reference has been made,

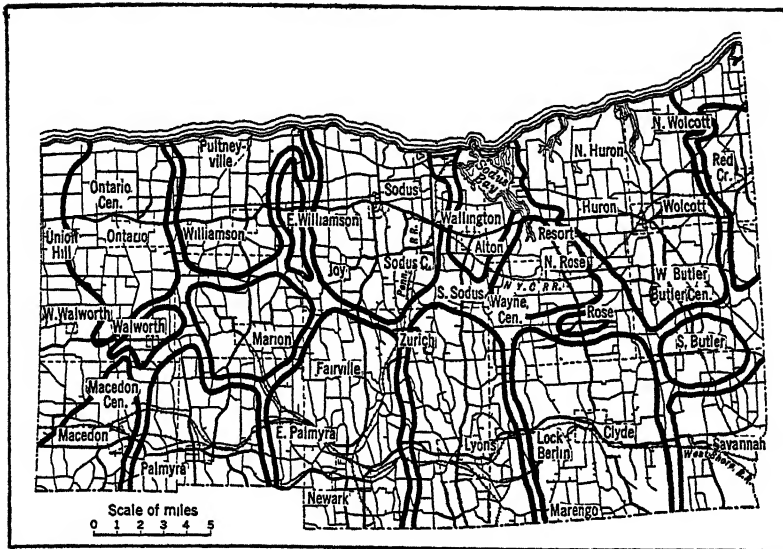


FIG. 22. VILLAGE FREQUENCY AREAS, THE SERVICE AREAS OF VILLAGES MOST FREQUENTLY VISITED IN WAYNE COUNTY

Source: Hoffsomer, Harold C., *Relation of Cities and Larger Villages to Changes in Rural Trade and Social Areas in Wayne County, New York*. Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, Bulletin 532, 1934.

the modern trend is toward an accumulation of certain types of service agencies in certain kinds of centers. This has a direct bearing, not only upon the extent of community service areas surrounding the center, but upon the solidarity and character of the community. Country centers in the form of neighborhoods, hamlets, or very small villages, have come to be the primary centers for supplying "around-the-corner" grocery service, elementary schooling, church and social center services, all of which farm families apparently want near at hand.

In summary, the village or small town is in possession of the major patronage of rural people for staple groceries, farm machinery, work clothes, hardware, certain types of furniture and clothing, banking, marketing, high school, library, weekly newspaper, and some forms of recreation. This will be shown in detail in the later discussions of village service institutions. Trade lines in determining community areas, however, are less important than ten years ago, while the educational,

organizational, social, and, to a lesser extent, religious relationships, are more important. Tendencies observed and recorded in earlier studies for the uniting of town and country around certain types of functions and institutions have continued until rural centers of reasonable size and completeness can be said to be rural community centers of today. This is not to say that the evidence points to the complete self-sufficiency of any one type of rural community, because the village center is giving way to city centers for such services as ready-to-wear clothing, and for specialized forms of recreation and hospital or medical care.

Similar tendencies are evident in various parts of the country. For example in a study of Washington County, Arkansas, the conclusion is drawn that villages with 500 to 2500 inhabitants and small cities are the source of about three fourths of all economic and recreational services, while certain social and religious activities and elementary education tend to remain in the local neighborhood or hamlet centers. Organization is said to be chiefly in the village stage. The main kinds of activities at the village center in which farm people participate are the following: Economic, social, religious, journalistic, educational, recreational, and health.¹

After careful analysis of the social and economic services obtained by country families within the service areas of village centers, the conclusion is drawn that for Broome County, New York, villages with more than 250 inhabitants are the centers of true rural communities. The smaller places are minor centers of social and economic life, but they tend to decrease in importance.²

The practical importance of such conclusions is obvious when related to the establishment of central rural schools and to outlining their district boundaries. "If properly located," the report says, "these central rural school districts will largely determine the boundaries of the rural communities

¹ McCormick, T. C., *Rural Organization in Washington County, Arkansas*. Bulletin 285, Agricultural Experiment Station, College of Agriculture, Fayetteville, 1933.

² Sanderson, Dwight, *Social and Economic Areas of Broome County, New York, 1928*. Bulletin 559, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, 1933.

of the future." Improper location of schools, especially high schools and consolidated schools, is one cause (often, indeed, the chief cause) of friction and even of eventual failure. The same conclusion holds with respect to the organization of larger church parishes.¹

In addition to the general community area, a smaller zone of more primary or personal service relationships can be distinguished, at least for most of the smaller centers. Such areas or zones lie close in to the center and include farm families who do not have neighborhood or hamlet centers conveniently near. In one sense they might be termed "village neighborhood" areas. The reasons which families give for frequenting the village as a primary center are that they "have friends there," "they know folks there," "relatives have moved in," and "it is handy and convenient."

Another zone or area extending out beyond the general community boundary can also be found, at least for some of the larger centers. It may be called the tertiary or specialized area — an area from which families seek the larger center for such special services as ready-to-wear clothing, the social services of hospital or clinic, the educational service of a normal or technical school, the sociability service of a good motion picture house, a musical concert or a dramatic performance. The reasons given for seeking such services are "wider variety for selection," "the services are more expert and professional," or "the institutions are larger, better and more specialized." Families are willing to go farther although less frequently and perhaps to pay more, in order to get what they really want.

A conventionalized graph has been drawn to show the three zones or areas surrounding various types of centers. For the smaller places there is very little if any difference in size between the secondary or general community area and the specialized area, if indeed a specialized type of service area is present at all. The larger city center does not have the primary or personal

¹ Brunner, Edmund de S., *The Larger Parish*, Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1934.

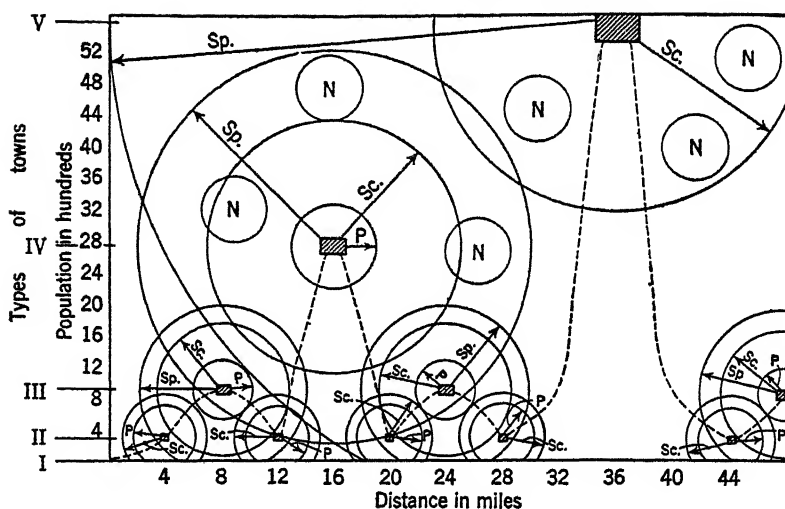


FIG. 23. A THEORETICAL GRAPH INDICATING THE INTERRELATION OF RURAL GROUP AREAS AND TYPES OF SERVICE CENTERS

- Type I. Single Service (Neighborhood or Hamlet)
 Type II. Limited and Simple Service (Small Village)
 Type III. Semi-complete or Intermediate (Village or Small Town)
 Type IV. Complete and Particularly Specialized (Town or Small City)
 Type V. Urban and Highly Specialized (City)
- P. Primary Service Area
 Sc. Secondary Service Area
 Sp. Specialized Service Area
 N. Country Neighborhood Area

Source: Kolb, J. H., *Service Relations of Town and Country*, Research Bulletin 58, December, 1923, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

area and its secondary area is relatively small, while its specialized area extends far out to include most of the areas of the smaller centers. Neighborhoods or hamlet centers appear near the periphery of the larger community areas, and they also tend to cluster about the secondary area of the larger city.

It should therefore be evident that an association does exist in this pattern of service relationships among four factors: first, size of center in terms of population; second, type of center in terms of its aggregated institutions and agencies; third, size and conformation of the service areas; and fourth, distances between the centers.

A dotted line of the hill and valley shape connects the various types of centers in the graph. This line might be considered the "great American highway." As was suggested at the

beginning of the chapter, every farmer's gate opens onto this highway, but as can be seen, it extends beyond his "home town" to other centers, some larger, some smaller. Not only the farmer but the villager and the city dweller as well are using this highway, and the traffic is in two directions. The highway then, becomes the symbol of the interdependence of service centers and tributary areas.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND SOLIDARITIES

What goes on within the area determines the character and the group solidarity of the rural community. In many regions the community is an emerging, a developing group. In the past, the country has been characterized by its neighborhood and family groups, and the village or town by a certain self-sufficiency eventuating in legal incorporation. Now common concern and interdependent interests are bringing the two together. It is important, therefore, to examine the activities and to test the solidarities which have been achieved. Separate chapters will be given to discussions of some of the community institutions and agencies, but the purpose here is to review briefly some of the trends in activities which tend to unite or solidify this emerging group, and to examine some of the factors which lead toward co-operation or conflict.

Town and country contacts multiplied. Many activities of community groups do not lend themselves to exact measurements; they are, nevertheless, the very things which give significance to map-making and to tabular analysis. It must be recognized, first of all, that improved travel and communication facilities have enabled country and village people to multiply their contacts many fold — contacts of trade, education, recreation or sociability. Some of these contacts are of the day-by-day sort which occur in the market place, the schoolroom, the street corner, or the social affair. Others are contacts of a more fundamental kind, as represented by a condition found in one Middle-Western small town of about

1200 population, where more than 150 village families were retired farmers. In some instances the older children were left on the farms; in others the younger ones accompanied the parents to attend the town school. The retired farmers usually became home owners in the village and, therefore, interested voters, although sometimes reluctant taxpayers. Lines of cleavage were, consequently, not so easily found within the town group or between the town and country elements of the community. A further reason for this was that a number of business men had spent their childhood on the adjacent farms. Other villagers owned farms and rented them to grown sons of neighboring farmers. So complete had the solidarity become that in 1931 a country neighborhood church, very strong and quite isolated in 1921, had merged with a village church of the same synod, into one congregational organization. Services were continued in the two places, but the congregations were one.

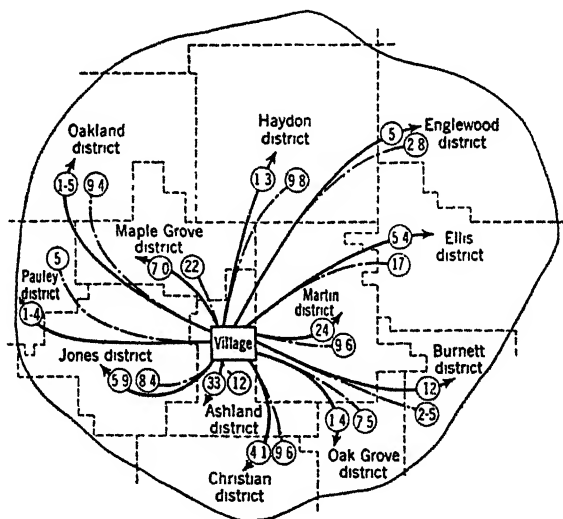


FIG. 24. PER CAPITA EFFICIENCY OF THE VILLAGE IN PRODUCING CONTACTS FOR THE OTHER AREAS, AND VICE VERSA

Solid lines indicate production of contacts per capita of village population for the people of each district. Broken lines indicate production of contacts per capita of the district populations for the people of the village.

Source: Burt, H. J., *Contacts in a Rural Community*, Research Bulletin 125, August, 1929, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Missouri, Columbia.

In a Missouri community, where contacts were carefully observed and counted, it was found that of the total contacts within the community other than trade, 58.3 per cent were the educational contacts of school children; 29.1 per cent were the social contacts of visiting and the remaining 12.6 per cent were of a miscellaneous type. Of the educational contacts about six times more were within than without the community. The accompanying graph gives an interesting picture of this sort of contact analysis.

Community enterprises and activities. It is apparent that with the passage of time, trade, marketing, and merchandising became less important in determining community boundaries and often contributed less to group strength or solidarity. Such economic contacts or enterprises are less personal than formerly; there is more trading or "shopping around." Social contacts and activities seem to assume greater importance as judged by such indexes as proportions of country memberships in different kinds of social and fraternal organizations and the numbers of joint town-country enterprises and activities.

The increased importance of social relationships is found particularly in the educational field. From every region and by every method of study came the report that the school, more especially the high school, was the most important and decisive single factor in determining town and country community solidarity or in defining community areas. This is a conclusion of much significance, and it will receive further reference at various points in the study of the institutional relations in rural society. As time goes on, the number as well as the proportions of farm and village youth mingling in and graduating from high schools will be sure to increase. This situation, quite different from that of the previous generation, can be counted upon to have much influence in welding town and country.

Among other forms of social activities which bring people into more primary or personal relationships on a community basis, can be listed community fairs, mutual fire protection,

and joint affairs involving organized groups. Community fairs, festivals or celebrations were popular forms of community enterprises, especially in the Far West, Middle West, and Middle Atlantic regions. Sometimes they were modest affairs arranged by school or church groups for both village and country constituents. At other times they were ambitious undertakings which drew thousands of people and called for well-organized plans and a large number of committees. In the opinion of local leaders, such joint responsibilities for large tasks eliminated differences due to residence, occupation, class or creed, and made the community a working group.

For such occasions there was often the parade with floats made to represent the different interests or institutions of the community; exhibits of school work, agricultural and horticultural products, and the domestic or fine arts; the athletic contests and games; and there was the evening of entertainment, often with numbers by the different local organizations or perhaps a musical program, and finally dancing or group games. In describing such events, local people were sure to emphasize the importance of joint responsibility and mutual obligation in order for success to be assured. In some communities, in earlier years, the village business group had initiated programs of this kind, but evidently their motives were not above reproach, for country people were reported to have said that they preferred "to pay their own way" at the time of the event, rather than afterward in advanced prices.

Mutual fire-protection projects were found to be a means of uniting village and country in some regions, several examples being encountered in New York and Pennsylvania. The handicaps of legal incorporation of village and the failure of community areas to correspond with either township or country lines were overcome by the creation of fire-protection districts which were made to follow community boundaries. The fire-fighting equipment was owned by this district, and town and county were served equally well. The plan was satis-

factory to everybody concerned because it gave increased protection to village property, it afforded more equipment, and it gave regular service to previously unprotected farm property. It also proved of decided advantage in dealing with insurance companies.

Joint affairs involving the co-operation of organizations of both country and village were found to be definitely increasing in the 140 communities to which reference has been made. These might be dinners or picnics by village Chambers of Commerce or service clubs with County Farm Bureaus or Granges. They might be music festivals sponsored jointly by village or town civic choruses or orchestras and country neighborhood or school choruses. Separate numbers might form the first half of the program, and the last half might consist of a grand ensemble; in this case, songs might be sung which had been rehearsed separately over a period of months according to instructions received by mail and radio from the director, who would lead the combined chorus in the final concert.

Enterprises and activities such as have been described frequently lead to some kind of more or less permanent organization, or to a council whereby the community can function as a unit in various other enterprises. One final achievement is sometimes a community building — the symbol of community solidarity. Take, for example, the story of the Community Civics Club of Bernice, Louisiana. The membership of the club includes people from both town and country. A community calendar of important events is prepared at the beginning of the year. Many activities were promised, such as planting trees and shrubs, but the culminating achievement was the building of the community house, a small, neat structure, equipped with electric lights, running water, and facilities for taking care of various social and civic gatherings. It carries the designation: "Home of Bernice Civic Club, Headquarters for Town and Country People."¹

¹ Hayes, A. W., *Community Enterprises in Louisiana*, Research Bulletin 3, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Community also the result of undirected forces. Social control and direction are by no means the only forces at work in building rural communities. It is quite possible that in a great number of cases the uncontrolled and undirected forces are at least equally important. A popular expression is that it is "the trend of the times." A very interesting case is the story of Waterville, New York, in which it was possible to trace many of the active community forces back to 1900. This is a situation where general social forces are working toward the integration of town and country, forming a modern community group. To tell the whole story is, of course, unnecessary, but the conclusion is quoted in the following paragraphs:

Waterville is not, as a matter of fact, scheming to absorb Deansboro, but circumstances are forcing the two to co-operate; circumstances beyond the control of either are molding them, controlling them, harnessing them together.

That is the great lesson that the story of the Waterville Community has to tell. Men came to the great hollow in the hills, looking for homes, and clustered in the best sites that nature had provided for them; intermarriage reinforced proximity; they became self-conscious neighborhoods. Then hop culture came into the area, dominated the lives of all, reached across the neighborhood boundaries, and tied them together in town association. When the hop industry failed, dairying and cash crops took its place; the automobile and the hard road at once brought them together in a community with Waterville village as its center, and exposed the new community to the influences of the modern world.

All of these factors were, in large measure, beyond control; the world forces influenced them, resistance was in vain, and they adjusted themselves as best they could, like iron under the blows of a blind blacksmith. The cumulative effect has been to create a common hope, a common need, a common center of interest — unsought, and for that very reason all the stronger — known as the Waterville Community.¹

¹ This local situation is the one described by Dr. James Mickel Williams, now of Hobart College, in his doctoral dissertation, *An American Town*. It was published privately in 1906 and is now out of print, but much of the material has been embodied in his two books, *Our Rural Heritage* and *The Expansion of Rural Life*. The present study, the report of which is quoted here, is by Mather, Townsend, and Sanderson, *A Study of Rural Community Development*, Bulletin 608, Cornell University, College of Agriculture, 1934.

Tendencies toward community co-operation and conflict. Finally, an effort was made to measure the tendencies leading toward co-operation and toward conflict within town-country communities, by a combined use of all materials gathered in the study of the 140 communities in 1924 and in 1930. Each local community was classed in one of three categories for each period, namely, "co-operative," "neutral," or "in conflict," as Table 15 shows.

TABLE 15. VILLAGE AND COUNTRY RELATIONS, BY REGION — 140 VILLAGES *

Region	Number of Villages	Co-operative			Neutral			Conflicting		
		1924	1930	1936	1924	1930	1936	1924	1930	1936
All regions.....	140	27	100	85	89	34	42	24	6	13
Middle Atlantic	28	5	19	17	20	8	7	3	1	4
South.....	30	4	26	14	22	4	9	4	0	7
Middle West...	60	9	41	38	37	16	20	14	3	2
Far West... ..	22	9	14	16	10	6	6	3	2	0

* Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, Columbia University Press, 1937.

Even if all due allowances are made for personal bias in such a classification, the table points toward a significant trend — greater co-operation between town and country. More frequent contacts made possible by improved highways were without a doubt very important. The village had also become a center for many types of activities. Furthermore, farmers had moved into villages and villagers had become farm owners in many regions, by purchase, inheritance, or foreclosure. The distressed condition of agriculture had done much to create a new sense of relationship and a keener understanding of farmers' problems on the part of villagers than in earlier years. Farmers, too, seemed more intelligent regarding problems of readjustment faced by many business men. They had "talked things over." A feeling of mutual interdependence had emerged; at least, such was the explanation given by many local community leaders.

Co-operation, however, was not in complete ascendancy. The communities classed as "neutral" left much to be desired, although their number had decreased materially in the six-

year period. In many of these situations just the ordinary routine was being followed — going to town, to trade, to market, to church or school — but little or nothing was being done to quicken a sense of community interdependence. Things were just taken for granted. In some communities, on the other hand, there appeared a tendency merely to guard one's own interests against encroachments, but not to say or to do anything. This might be interpreted as incipient conflict.

Conflict had not disappeared entirely from some of these town and country situations, however, but it had assumed other forms and features. Sometimes the failure of an attempted mutual enterprise, such as consolidation of town and country schools, produced a serious reaction. In some places, crises such as bank failures, bankruptcy proceedings, or business dishevelments following the financial crash of 1929, had exposed old cleavages. Recent conflicts arose over consumer co-operation, rural electrification, relief grants, and demands of hard-pressed farmers for credit.

In still other situations tendencies toward conflict were no longer on the older personal basis, but had passed into more impersonal relations, more remotely controlled. Cases in point, of course, were the increasing financial and administrative control of local institutions by outside agencies. For stores and banks it was the chain or affiliated organizations; for the marketing agencies it was the co-operative or corporate terminal association; for the newspaper it was the syndicate; for the schools and churches it was the centralized authority of general boards. Many illustrations were found where a local representative of the more centralized agencies could not seem to true his decisions and actions with what local people considered to be their local needs. Chain-store managers were charged with a lack of interest in local problems of credit, unemployment, or community organization. School principals were thought to be more sensitive to state or national standards than to local requirements.

The local rural community of town and country is, therefore,

a growing and developing thing. It has many local relationships which are capable of fine integration or which may be objects for controversy. But, whether in co-operation or in conflict, the strands of its life are increasingly fabricated with various special interests, both within and without the community, as well as with larger urban groups located farther along on the great American highway.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Consider again a household, rural or urban, with which you are well acquainted. Indicate its location and then, by use of six arrows drawn so as to indicate the direction and distance, show the location of centers to which members of this household go for each of the following services: (You may have to split some arrows if more than one center is used for some services.)
 - a. Economic — marketing, merchandising, financing.
 - b. Religious — church, religious education, organizations.
 - c. Education — school, high school, library.
 - d. Social — sociability, recreation, welfare.
 - e. Communication — mail service, telephone, newspaper.
 - f. Professional — doctor, lawyer, dentist.
2. Are “trade” areas and “social” areas for villages or towns coincident? Explain why.
3. Draft in general form the general community or service area of the “home town” village you have described in the previous chapter. Sketch the areas of each of the six services listed in the previous exercise if they differ from the general community area. (The general community area shall be defined as that area from which a majority of the families come to the village for a majority of their services.)
4. What does Dr. Galpin mean by “rurbanism”? State your agreement or differences with this idea.
5. What difficulties and inhibitions need to be overcome in drawing farmers and villagers into larger community arrangements? Illustrate.

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CHAPTER VI

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

RURAL society is made up of many different kinds of groups. Neighborhoods, villages, and communities all have their places, but within their boundaries or cutting across them are to be found such other groups as farmers' clubs, homemakers' clubs, 4-H clubs, spray rings, parent-teacher associations, choral and dramatic clubs, young people's societies, breeders' associations, co-operative buying or selling organizations, informal social groups, and many, many others. These groups are not characterized so much by their location as by their activities, and the purposes or the interests which they represent. Although there is a very wide variety of such groups in rural society, it is possible to bring together some of the more readily recognized types and to study them from the point of view of interest.

Interest groups arise out of likenesses and differences in age, sex, occupation, tradition, experience, choice, propensity, intent, and so on. They may be contrasted with locality groups. Locality groups have lateral or geographic dimensions. Interest groups have perpendicular or voluntary dimensions. Locality groups depend upon common life, proximity, residence in a specific physical area. Interest groups depend upon polarity, promotion, special concerns, leadership, deliberate effort. This polarity implies fields of magnetic influence. When thus released from locality restrictions certain people are attracted to certain of these poles of interest. In popular parlance, the phrase, "Birds of a feather flock together," conveys the idea very well indeed. Then, some wag has added, "And they sit a long time," which simply means that when people are thus drawn together into groups of congenial interest, the tendency is for them to want to continue and to hold together.

ORIGINS OF RURAL INTEREST GROUPS

Americans have a penchant for organizations and associations, at least so say many foreign critics. A gibe of one such critic is to the effect that whenever two or three Americans get together, they soon organize, elect officers, adopt a constitution, and appoint committees. Although this is obviously an exaggeration, it does suggest something of the part which organized groups of many kinds have played and continue to play in this country.

A very brief excerpt from just one foreign writer will serve as an illustration. The Frenchman, de Tocqueville, was greatly impressed by the many organizations and societies which were common to the early periods. He writes:

Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies in which all take part, but they have associations of a thousand other kinds — religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes.... Wherever, at the head of some new undertaking you see government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association.¹

It may well be that this tendency to join hands in the prosecution of common interests is an essential part of a democratic society. The great historian of the American frontier was quick to see the rôle which such voluntary groups played in the opening and the developing of new territory by the pioneers. In a characteristic paragraph, Professor Turner says:

From the very first, it became evident that these men had means of supplementing their individual activity by informal combinations. One of the things that impressed all early travelers in the United States was the capacity for extra-legal voluntary associations. This power of the newly arrived pioneers to join together

¹ De Tocqueville, Alexis, *Democracy in America*. From a translation by Henry Reeve, vol. I, p. 242. 1876.

for a common end without the intervention of governmental institutions was one of their marked characteristics. The log-rolling, the house-raising, the husking-bee and apple-paring, and the squatters' associations whereby they protected themselves against the speculators in securing titles to their clearings on the public domain, the camp meeting, the mining camp, the vigilantes, the cattle-raisers' associations, the "gentlemen's agreements," are a few of the indications of this attitude.¹

This tendency toward many forms of organization did not decline with the recession of the frontier. It is a factor of importance in rural society at the present time for, as Professor Turner emphasizes, its origin is not one of tradition and custom, but of initiative and of voluntary action. He continues:

It is well to emphasize this American trait, because in a modified way it has come to be one of the most characteristic and important features of the United States today. America does through informal association and understanding on the part of the people many of the things which in the Old World are and can be done only by governmental intervention and compulsion. These associations were in America not due to immemorial custom of tribe or village community. They were extemporized by voluntary action.²

Groupings like the neighborhood which characterized earlier society as Professor MacIver points out, tend to break up into associational units and to assume associational character in a more modern life.³ In the earlier neighborhoods there were so many common interests that group organization could be quite simple, differentiations few, and practically everyone was included in the general plan. As has been shown in an earlier chapter, the more active neighborhoods of the present are characterized by activities, institutions, and special interests more than by locality, nearness of residence, or traditional ways of life. It must be said, however, that many of the newer forms of group alignment have sprung from the soil of the older neighborhoods.

¹ Turner, F. J., *The Frontier in American History*, p. 343. Henry Holt & Co.

² Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

³ MacIver, R. M., *Society, Its Structure and Changes*, p. 55. R. R. Smith, Inc., 1931.

INTEREST GROUPS IN MODERN RURAL LIFE

Facilities for travel and communication are freeing country and village dwellers from former restrictions of locality and residence so that they can seek their satisfactions in group arrangements of their own choice or design. One might expect this trend in the newer sections of the country, but it is true even in New England. From the study of the rural town of Lebanon, Connecticut, the conclusion was drawn that similarity of interests is a more workable basis for most rural group life than is mere geographical juxtaposition.¹

This transfer from locality groups to interest groups and from organic forms to contractual forms of association, whether by voluntary means or through skillful promotion, is a significant trend and one which explains many of the rural social movements of the present time. This is not to say that neighborhood and community groups have entirely lost their influence, but simply that interest groups are of increasing importance.

Interests about which country groups form. Even though there is a wide variety of interests about which groups in rural society form, certain types can be selected for study. For the purposes of this chapter some of the more easily recognized country groups will be chosen. They are the ones which are rather deliberately formed and have officers, programs and procedures. Of course, there are other types which are more informal and transient, and there are also those which bring together country and village people and, in some cases, even rural and urban people.

In a sample area of five counties in central and southern Wisconsin, 351 country groups of the type described were found.² They included organizations with 75 different names, but Table 16 shows that about 75 per cent of them can be grouped into twelve classes or kinds. It is evident that such forms as parent-teacher associations, farmers' clubs, commu-

¹ Hypes, J. L., *Social Participation in a Rural New England Town*, p. 99. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1927.

² Kolb, J. H., and Wileden, A. F., *Special Interest Groups in Rural Society*, Research Bulletin 84, December, 1927, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin.

nity clubs, 4-H clubs, homemakers' clubs, and co-operative associations are among the most popular groups. The 91 organizations included under the miscellaneous item, include mothers' clubs, boys' clubs, farm bureaus, fair associations, equity societies, and cemetery associations. The names, however, are often more indicative of the form which the organization takes and may not be a reliable cue to the real activity or the central interest of the group. For example, it was found that a group called a farmers' club was actually a choral society; that a parent-teacher association was a women's social and sewing group, and that a community club was a cemetery association. Because the name did not always designate the interest, the 351 groups were studied at first hand and then classified according to their real interests.

TABLE 16. SPECIAL INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS IN THE ORDER OF FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE IN FIVE WISCONSIN COUNTIES

Professional Forms Total	Organizations	
	Number 351	Per cent 100.0
Parent-teacher Associations	47	13.4
Farmers' Clubs...	46	13.1
Community Clubs	43	12.0
4-H Clubs . . .	34	9.7
Homemakers' Clubs .	20	5.7
Co-operative Associations	20	5.7
Spray Rings . . .	14	4.0
Breeders' Associations	10	2.8
Horticultural Societies	8	2.3
Cow Testing Associations	7	2.0
Shipping Associations . .	7	2.0
Milk Producers' Associations	5	1.4
Miscellaneous (63 names)	91	25.9

The twelve major interests or functions about which the groups formed are shown in Table 17. It is quite evident from the table that social enjoyment is an important interest, for it was found to operate in over 71 per cent of the cases. Better farming comes second; the most significant fact, however, is that these groups are not single in interest; the majority of them have two or more interests. This is one of the outstanding characteristics of this type of country organization.

Many have interests which are not highly specialized; that is, several interests are closely associated. Some interests, such as the social in the sense of sociability, are seldom found alone.

TABLE 17. INTERESTS ABOUT WHICH GROUPS FORMED IN THE ORDER OF FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE

Interest classes	Organizations	
	Number	Per cent
All organizations *	351	100.0
Social enjoyment.	252	71.8
Better farming. .	115	32.8
Help school and teacher.	84	24.0
Better business. . . .	59	16.8
Young people's interests	59	16.8
Health and social welfare	41	11.7
Home improvement. . .	40	11.4
Public and civic affairs.	15	4.3
General community betterment	13	3.7
Unite locals.	5	1.4
Mutual improvement. . .	5	1.4
Help church and preacher. . .	5	1.4

* Obviously the sum of the organizations in the various interest classes greatly exceeds the total number of organizations, because any one organization may fall into more than one of the classes.

Moreover, some of the groups owe their origins to the older, more generalized type of neighborhood organization. They are just now in the process of being specialized and pointed in the direction of one or two special interests.

Similar types of groups organized about similar poles of interest are found in other states. An Illinois study is summarized in Table 18, where the kinds of organizations and their purposes are compared. In the 230 groups of farm people, the educational and the social or sociability interests rank very high. The social purposes most frequently mentioned by the leaders were as follows: developing acquaintanceship and fellowship, providing opportunity for the exchange of ideas which would in any way contribute to the social welfare of the community, and satisfying purely recreational needs through games, dances and the like. Granges, community units, and community clubs were more likely to emphasize social than educational purposes.²

² Lindstrom, D. E., *Local Group Organization Among Illinois Farm People*, Bulletin 392, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Illinois, Urbana, June, 1933.

The sources from which such interest or functional organizations draw their membership are shown very clearly in the map (Fig. 25). It shows the wide area in which the members of the Sciota Community Club reside. This club, organized in 1924, holds its meetings in the little town of Sciota. A careful check of the location of the homes from which the members come to the meetings indicates that they are scattered over two townships and that some are as far as five miles away from the town.

In a Southern state, Virginia, the interests about which country groups form have been classified under three general headings as follows: educational societies, farm organiza-

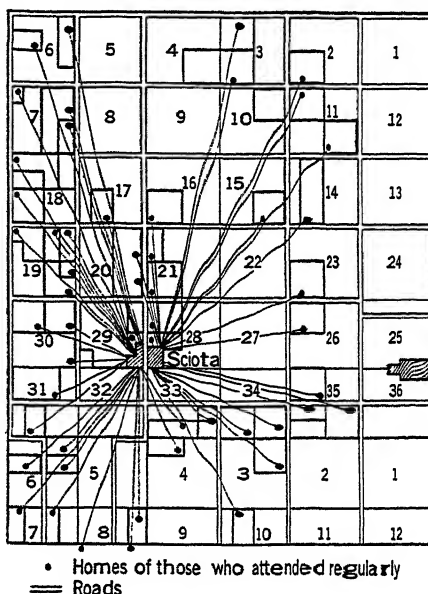


FIG. 25. AREA OF INFLUENCE OF THE SCIOTA COMMUNITY CLUB OF MC-DONOUGH COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1930

Source Lindstrom, D. E., *Local Group Organization Among Illinois Farm People*, Bulletin 394, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Illinois, Urbana.

TABLE 18. ORIGINAL PURPOSES FOR WHICH 230 GROUPS OF ILLINOIS FARM PEOPLE WERE ORGANIZED

Type of Organization	Number of Groups	Educational Purposes Per cent	Social Purposes Per cent	Better Farming Per cent	Community Development Per cent	Improvement of the School Per cent
Community clubs .	47	27	54	13	31	8
Farm bureau units.	46	70	26	60	13	13
Parent-teacher ass'ns	45	30	27	0	20	70
Home bureau units . . .	31	84	3	41	16	0
Subordinate granges . . .	24	44	60	20	20	0
Community units	15	60	40	27	20	0
Others *	22	39	48	9	18	0
Total	230	49	35	25	20	17

* Includes 9 farmers' clubs, 4 4-H clubs, 4 women's clubs, 3 community councils, and 2 farmers' unions.

tions, and commodity marketing associations.¹ Among the educational societies are found the Co-operative Education Association, the parent-teacher association, farmers' institutes, homemakers' associations, farmers' evening classes, and numerous educational councils, such as agricultural advisory councils, home advisory councils, 4-H club councils, and high school advisory councils. An analysis of the work of these societies reveals a wide variety of activities and purposes. Although of a special interest character themselves, some of the societies are broken down into highly specialized committees or groups. For example, the Co-operative Education Association has ten standard committees, among them being health, child welfare, roads, agriculture, and citizenship.

Among the more general farm organizations are listed the Farmers' Union, the Farm Bureau, the Grange, and very many independent farmers' clubs. The commodity marketing associations are reported to be on the increase in the state of Virginia. They are local in character, but many attempt to cover the state by means of federations or co-operative agreements. The whole development of the marketing associations, especially those organized on the co-operative principle, is a movement of great importance in rural society. In many ways it becomes a first-class illustration of the tendency toward the interest or functional type of organization which is being considered in this chapter. The co-operative form of organization becomes a principle or a pole of interest which attracts some farmers and repels others. The different types of commodities also become a selective factor which draws certain producers together. The following are but a few examples, indicating the extent to which specialization has grown: Valley of Virginia Co-operative Milk Producers Association, Coon River Tomato Association of the Northern Neck, Rockingham Co-operative Farm Bureau, Inc., Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange and Rockbridge Co-operative Livestock Marketing Association.

In this state, furthermore, another whole set of country in-

¹ Garnett, W. E., *Rural Organizations in Relation to Rural Life in Virginia*, Bulletin 256, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg, 1927.

terest groups and organizations is found. They are Negro organizations,¹ and they, in turn, can be classified into three large types of interests, as follows: agricultural organizations, educational societies, and fraternal or secret orders. In many respects the agricultural and educational organizations parallel those which have previously been described, for there are farmer conferences, 4-H clubs, agricultural extension societies, school improvement leagues, and county fair associations. The fraternal and secret orders have many interesting and unique features. The interests to which they cater are evidently a feeling of brotherhood, a desire for security, which takes the form of insurance and mutual-aid plans, and a sense of the religious, which expresses itself in ritualism. Organizations of a fraternal nature are, according to the bulletin, most numerous among rural Negroes. A list of the names of the organizations in the one community of Fairfields, Northumberland County, may convey some idea of a local situation. In this community there are thirteen adult organizations, as follows: Knights of Jerusalem, Court of Queen Esther, Good Samaritans, Lone Star, Edwardsville and Ophelia; Odd Fellows, Bay View and Tranquillity, Household of Ruth, Pride of Lilian, Masons and Eastern Star, and Rock Lee Home Society. It is not unusual to find a half dozen or more such organizations in a single community. Although they bear a variety of strange names, their objectives are practically identical.

Some general characteristics. Diverse and varied as those special interest organizations are, they do possess, nevertheless, certain general characteristics. First of these is their dependence upon leadership and promotion. In the five counties the organizations of which were described in the previous section, the responsibility for starting and promoting was shared about equally by local leaders and by leaders from outside the community. The original motivation or urge for those organizations concerned with the farm, the home, the educational and the young people's interests, came, in the majority of cases,

¹ Ellison, J. M., *Negro Organization and Leadership in Relation to Rural Life*, Bulletin 290, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg, 1933.

from outside leaders, representing such agencies as the agricultural or home economics extension service, the parent-teacher association and school officials. In getting the organization started, these outside promoters worked usually through local leaders. In organizing the educational interests local teachers played an important part.

Locally elected officers were given practically the entire responsibility for keeping the organization active. Those groups concerned with young people's interests were sometimes an exception, for adult sponsors or leaders were usually present. The quality of the local leaders — their abilities, training and outlook — is, therefore, very important. If this fact is overlooked, too great emphasis may be given to the organization itself and too little to the continuity of its leadership, an oversight which accounts for the relatively short life of many local organizations. The election of officers is not enough; their subsequent training and work is what counts in the long run.

A second general characteristic is that most interest groups depend upon a program of activities to accomplish their objectives. Meetings are held, their nature and frequency depending upon what the organization is trying to accomplish. For those groups organized about the social, the educational or the young people's interests, the meeting usually consists of four parts: an educational program, a social period, a business session, and refreshments. To attempt a general meeting of country people without refreshments would be like trying to run a car without gasoline. Eating and visiting together are prime requisites in the programs of many a congeniality group. Co-operative organizations, of course, give more time and attention to business features, but even they do not completely neglect the occasional picnic or social affair. Activities other than the regular meetings are many and varied, such as poultry culling and tree spraying demonstrations, health clinics and exhibits, plays and pageants, parties and picnics, community and county fairs, debates and discussions, or games and field days. Such activities become the center of attention for the group itself, and they also provide an opportunity for displaying

or dramatizing its work before other members of the community. The accompanying chart shows which type of activity is likely to be associated with the several kinds of organizations and which ones are peculiar to one or two. Picnics, for example, are found with each of the seven kinds of organizations included in the chart, while clinics are confined largely to the health interest groups, and sales agencies to the co-operative business organizations.

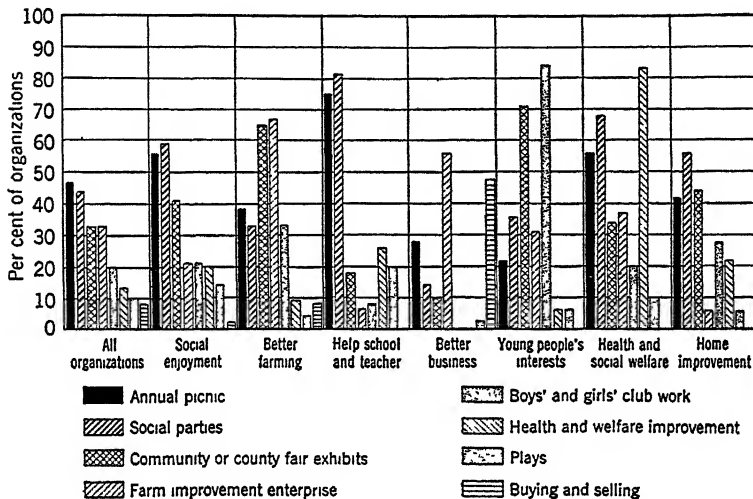


FIG. 26. PRINCIPAL PROJECTS

Characteristic projects are of a social nature, such as picnics and social parties.

Source: Kolb and Wileden, *Special Interest Groups in Rural Society*, Research Bulletin 84, December, 1927, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Now and then an activity may be fostered which is quite out of line with the main interest for which a group has been organized, in fact, it may be done to divert attention from the central purpose. The story is told of a co-operative creamery which was not doing very well in a business way. The directors conceived the idea of holding a dance once a month for their members, hoping that they would have such a good time that they would overlook the financial difficulties. It came to be known as the "dancing creamery."

A third characteristic of interest groups is that by their very

nature only certain kinds and numbers of people are attracted to them. It may be redundant to say that interest groups need people who are interested, but the practical implication is important. Leaders are likely to go to one of two extremes. They will either generalize their programs in order to hold a larger group, and in this way lose the support of the persons most deeply interested, or they will hold too strictly to their original objectives and thus fail to attract sufficient numbers to carry on their enterprise. In other words, there is an appropriate size and kind of organization for certain types of interests. In the business or co-operative field the principle is known as "sufficient volume of business." There is also an appropriate "volume of people," neither too large nor too small, needed to carry on a mothers' club, a choral society or a subordinate Grange. It is not an accident, for instance, that college or university fraternities and sororities average approximately twenty-five or thirty members. A larger unit might be more economical to house, but the limiting factor is the number who can be truly congenial and who are enough alike in interests and propensities to work out a closely-knit, primary, functioning group.

Observation soon reveals that certain numbers do tend to become associated with certain interests. A good example is the 4-H club. At one time there were those leaders who sought to increase general county or state enrollments by enlarging local clubs. It did not take long to discover, however, that wider differences in age and more varied interests soon altered the desired character of the organization. Therefore, relatively small groups are maintained, and when more boys and girls can be interested, other units are formed and other leaders are sought. This principle is sometimes difficult to appreciate, since the ambition for large numbers is often very compelling. The executive of a certain local farm organization could not be content until he "signed up" his two hundredth member. For some weeks after the "membership drive" everything seemed to go along very well. A general program with a high proportion of sociability and entertainment seemed to hold "the

crowd." As cold weather set in, however, the distances to travel seemed too great for some of the members. When the real program of work was announced, others were not interested, and when it became apparent to those most interested that their opportunity for participation would be limited because of the large membership, they too lost their original zeal.

A fourth characteristic of interest groups and organizations is their tendency to federate. As Chapter XXII, dealing with recreational and social agencies, will indicate, the modern tendency is for groups of like kind to federate. This is often undertaken in an attempt to unify the efforts and activities of a series of local organizations within a district or perhaps a county-wide plan. The county organization may even precede the locals and then promote and establish them. At other times the federation is the result of already established locals, which combine in a desire for united action and for wider outlets of group endeavor. The tendency to federate may also be considered one form of reconciliation for the overlapping and conflicting loyalties which arise in a local situation where there are many interest groups. The process may take place on a community basis, in which case it becomes one of the steps in social integration or "community organization," as it is termed, a problem with which Chapter XXIV will concern itself.

In his discussion of the social organization of the rural community, Professor Sanderson summarizes this characteristic as follows:

Inasmuch as these associations frequently represent interests which are common to similar groups in other communities, they federate in the same manner as did the early villages and for the same reasons, that is, to promote their common purposes, for defense of their organization, and to secure the greater social control of the individual association through the sanctions of the federated groups. Herein is one of the pressing problems of the rural community today: How may it maintain its autonomy against powerful national organizations which seek to establish local branches? Competing associations may go their way in the larger cities without opposition, whereas in the rural community undue competition of organizations is soon seen to be a waste of social resources, which are none too adequate at best. Hence many

rural communities are seeking some sort of community organization which will bring together the various interest groups in a common effort for community progress, a tendency which is an inevitable result of the specialization of interest groups, if the social organization finally tends to result in their better integration in the interest of the welfare of the locality group.¹

The life cycle of interest groups. Like other living things, groups follow cycles. These cycles consist of rather definite stages through which they pass, the periods being of long or short duration, according to the nature of the group, its central interest, and its surrounding conditions. The rise and decline of groups and organizations, in the abstract, may be taken for granted by many persons, but when a group with which they are personally associated is involved, it is quite another matter. Students of rural society will do well to watch the cycles of change carefully, not only within those groups of which they are members, but other special interest groups as well, for such changes are becoming very common. Many such organizations have a comparatively short life cycle, and this is a problem of much concern both to their leaders and to their members. This section presents a sort of composite narrative of what happens in the various periods in the life cycle of rural interest groups. Four periods may be observed. They are: stimulation, rise, carrying-on, and decline.

(1) *Stimulation.* The period of stimulation may come about by direct action, or it may be by indirection. In the first instance the purpose is stated openly. This is the rationalized procedure. When sufficient sentiment has been aroused, a union of kindred spirits takes place. Like the chemical reaction, it may be either a rapid or a slow process. It may come quickly at some promoted meeting where definite organization was not anticipated, even by the leaders; suddenly the idea "takes hold" and the movement rises like a wave, carrying the originators far past their channel markers. It may take more time when a certain amount of capital stock must be sold, or when a certain original quota of membership must be signed.

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *The Rural Community*, p. 539. Ginn & Co., 1932.

Even then there usually is some kind of "drive" or campaign with a certain amount of emotional excitement.

The indirect method of forming an interest group may have its origin in a social gathering which was greatly enjoyed. The desire for more occasions in the near future is voiced. A loosely formed organization results. In this case the purposes or interests remain veiled for a time, but gradually take form and become the axis around which further activities revolve.

(2) *Rise*. During the period of rise people who have never thought of organization approve it; they do more; they ask for admission and offer help in getting it started. There are frequent meetings and large crowds. Special meetings are called to decide upon such important matters as a constitution and the election of officers. Enthusiasm runs high. Everything is new and there are plenty of ideas. "Everybody" joins, that is, everyone at the organization meeting who is eligible. There are fewer who join at the next meeting and finally there are no new members.

Meanwhile, the structure of the organization is becoming "set." A constitution is accepted. This specifies that this organization shall meet once a month during the school year. It shall meet at the school house. It shall have four officers: a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, to be elected annually at the first meeting in January. Anyone who is "truly interested" may become a member. A two-thirds vote is necessary to change the constitution, which means that it is the fixed code or method of procedure for the organization from that time on.

After the first few meetings, however, the officers must "go it alone." Occasionally they assume the responsibility regularly, but more frequently they cast about for a method of assistance, and decide upon the plan of appointing committees. The organization has its select group of officers, committee chairmen, and volunteer speakers from the floor who virtually run it. The officers may change about, and new committees may be added, but this inner circle remains practically the same. Radical changes in the inner circle usually mean equally radical changes

in the nature of the organization, and vice versa. The problem, from the beginning, then, becomes one of creating loyalty of the leaders and through them to the organization. This process is well under way by the time the organization reaches its peak. Ideals and purposes have become codified, and even custom has begun to play its part. In other words, precedents have been established.

(3) *Carrying-on.* The crucial time for every organization comes after the promotion period is over and the newness has worn off. This is the period of "carrying-on." By this time the outside promoters have disappeared almost entirely from the scene, and the burden must be shouldered by local people, usually by the officers. From this time on, disillusionment may begin, for often certain promises were made and objectives held forth by the promoters that apparently are not and frequently cannot be fulfilled. Factions develop within the group and conflicts arise.

It may also be discovered at about this time that the group is conflicting with the ideals of other groups, or institutions, such as the school or church. Consequently, they may be denied the use of the school building, or the clergy may forbid their young people to take part. On the other hand, this new group may be trying to do almost the same things as an older group in the same locality. Adjustments are necessary and methods of establishing working relations with these other groups must be devised. If this necessity is ignored, the results are often fatal to both groups.

During this carrying-on period, the changing demands of the membership must be carefully watched. There are seasonal fluctuations in the programs and activities to be considered. People tire after a while even of pie, although it may be the much-coveted pumpkin pie. Likewise, debates and plays run their course, and something else must be supplied. Suggestions for change are brought before the organization. About half of the time, however, the constitutionalists or the fundamentalists win, and the proposed change is not made. If the group will accept the change, it may secure a new lease on life.

Added to the difficulties of this period is the tendency for organizations to grow up with its members. As a new organization, it begins life with people unfamiliar with its ways. They gradually mould it to conform to their ways of doing things. Amateur leaders gain confidence gradually and their efforts become more and more successful. New people coming in later cannot experience this same "give and take" process. They must take things more largely as they find them. This they occasionally refuse to do, particularly those of a younger generation. Thus, it is not unusual to find separate organizations for the various age groups, and to see a new organization cycle start with each succeeding generation.

(4) *Decline.* When decline once sets in, there are but two avenues open, other than demise. One is specialization. The old generalized club may become a strictly social club; it may become a women's welfare organization, or a farmers' discussion club. The present tendency is toward more specialized groups. The other avenue is a complete reorganization. For example, women's clubs which were practically inactive have reorganized and become active homemakers' clubs; community clubs have become parent-teacher associations, and equity societies have become co-operative shipping associations.

If disintegration begins in earnest, it is difficult to check without rather drastic measures. An attempt may be made to revive the organization, but revivals are rarely successful during this period. In the minds of many of its members the organization is not really dead, because they still have the constitution, the records, and some money in the treasury. It is simply "inactive." There does not seem to be a thoroughly respectable ritual of demise for organizations, and therefore many of them continue far beyond their span of usefulness and after the purposes or interests for which they were originally intended have completely disappeared. The officers say in great anxiety, "Why, we can't have it die on our hands."

(5) *"The road an organization travels."* If presented diagrammatically, the life cycles just described would appear as drawn in Figure 27. In this chart the time units must not be

construed in terms of years, although in some cases they might indicate years. Superimposed on the first curve may be the stimulation and rise periods of other groups. Another group can be expected to appear on a local scene as the first shows a tendency to decline. This diagram might carry the designation,

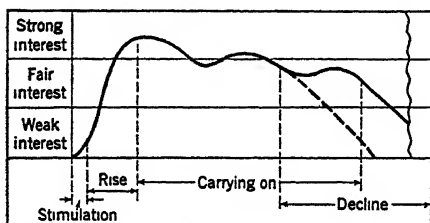


FIG. 27. THE ROAD AN ORGANIZATION TRAVELS

Source: Kolb and Wileden, *Making Rural Organizations Effective*, Bulletin 403, October, 1928, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

“The Road an Organization Travels.” The question which an organization leader or officer, or, for that matter, a member, may well ask himself is, “Where are we on this road just now?” Each period brings certain problems, and if one’s location can be fairly well established, much can

be done to anticipate and therefore to cope with the difficulties lurking in the next valley. The skillful leader, like the modern highway engineer, may find that he can fill up the low places by cutting down the hills.

UNEVEN RESPONSE OF PEOPLE TO GROUP ORGANIZATION

Another side of the shield, frequently not examined in this whole question of interest groups in rural society, is that of the uneven response of people to such groups. While some people in any local situation may identify themselves with many organizations, there are others who have no such affiliations. They simply do not belong; they are not “joiners.” There is likewise a tendency for this unevenness to appear when one family or one locality is compared with another.

Students of rural society need to concern themselves not only with its group organization, but also with the response which people living in that society make to its groups. They need to stand off now and then and view the situation through the

eyes of the local people; they need to ask such questions as the following: When is a community well organized? What is the capacity of a rural family for affiliation with and support of organizations? How is the development of personality related to its identification with social groups?

Variations in organization affiliation. Three measures can be employed to compare organization affiliations: locality to locality, family to family, and person to person. In order to have a concrete situation as an illustration, the results of a study in the five counties whose special interest organizations have been described will be very briefly reviewed.¹ The first evident variation was from locality to locality. Apparently there is something about a local situation which fosters or frowns upon organizations. Six school districts were found which averaged nineteen organizations per district, while six others averaged but eleven per district. The first set might be called "high" organization districts and the second "low" organization districts. The variations from family to family are even more striking. All of the 282 families in the twelve districts were visited, and the results are brought together in Table 19. It is significant that over 28 per cent of the families were without any organization affiliation; in the "high" districts it was only about 16 per cent, while in the "low" districts it was over 42 per cent. The organizations with which one or more members of the family were affiliated range from one to nine, the average being two.

Since the size of the family makes a difference, the comparison is made person to person. There were 924 persons 10 years of age or over, in the families. About one fourth of these persons were without affiliations in the "high" districts; over two thirds, in the "low" districts. In positive terms, the average number of organizations in the "high" districts was 1.4 per person, while in the "low" districts it was but .4 per person.

A final comparison brings the families and the persons to-

¹ Kirkpatrick and Kolb, *Rural Organizations and the Farm Family*, Research Bulletin 96, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, November, 1929.

TABLE 19. NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS WITH WHICH FAMILIES ARE AFFILIATED

Organizations with Which One or More Members of Family are Affiliated	All Districts (282 Families)		High Organization Districts (151 Families)		Low Organization Districts (131 Families)	
	Number	Per cent of Total	Number	Per cent of Total	Number	Per cent of Total
None	81	28.7	25	16.6	56	42.7
One	57	20.2	28	18.5	29	22.1
Two ..	63	22.4	32	21.2	31	23.7
Three. . . .	31	11.0	24	15.9	7	5.3
Four.	15	5.3	11	7.3	4	3.1
Five	15	5.3	12	7.9	3	2.3
Six .	8	2.8	8	5.3	..	..
Seven .	5	1.8	5	3.3	..	..
Eight ..	6	2.1	5	3.3	1	.8
Nine	1	.4	1	.7	1	..
Average per family .	2.0	..	2.6	.	1.2	....

gether. It was found that 34 per cent of the families had every member ten years of age or over affiliated with one or more organizations; these might be called "100 per cent families." At the other extreme, there were 81 families or over 28 per cent of the total, which had no member affiliated with any organization. They might be designated as "zero families." Again the variation between "high" and "low" districts was significant. For example, the "low" districts had nearly half (42.7 per cent) of their families in the zero classification, while the "high" districts had over half (53.0 per cent) of their families in the "100 per cent" group. On the whole, women and girls were affiliated with more organizations than were men and boys.

Such wide variations in the affiliations of rural people with organizations have many practical applications. For example, if a person were to attempt to introduce a new organization, should he go to "high" or to "low" organization districts, to "100 per cent" or to "zero" families? This is a general problem, for similar variations are found in all states where investigations have been made. The Illinois situation, for example, is well summarized in Table 20. Variations in the

extent to which persons are affiliated with various types of organizations are shown to range from 13 per cent in the case of community clubs to 3 per cent in that of farmers' clubs.

TABLE 20. EXTENT TO WHICH PERSONS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE WERE AFFILIATED WITH RURAL ORGANIZATIONS

(Localities represented, 306; counties, 60)

Organization	Number of Persons	Percentage of Total
Community clubs.	55	13
Farm bureau units. .	54	12
Parent-teacher associations	48	11
Home bureau units.	40	9
Subordinate granges.	29	7
Community units. .	28	6
Farmers' clubs. .	12	3
Miscellaneous. . . .	18 *	5
Total affiliated persons	284	66
Non-affiliated persons	149	34
Total all persons reporting.	433	100

* Includes 7 members of women's clubs, 5 members of 4-H clubs, 4 members of community councils, and 2 members of farmers' unions.

The Virginia study to which reference has been made concludes that the majority of rural people, when questioned, seem to believe in local organizations, but less than 20 per cent give them their active support. In Madison and Union counties, Ohio, it was found that in 610 farm families, 24 per cent had members belonging to lodges, 16 per cent to Granges, 28 per cent to Farm Bureaus, and 33 per cent to 4-H clubs. The question is, why such variations?

Reasons for variations in response to groups. One is sure to be impressed with the wide variations in the response of people to group organization, and in their behavior with respect to group activity, which the situations described above display. Why there are such variations and what difference they make in communities and in people are still open questions, calling for more study and thought. People themselves recognize the condition but do not seem to go far in the explanation of the underlying reasons. One hears characterizations of this or that neighbor in such phrases as the following: "He belongs

to everything," "She is always there," "He really supports his club," or, "She is a natural leader."

Careful analysis does reveal certain factors which are somehow related to or at least associated with this matter of group relationships. In the study of the 282 families, it was found, for example, that higher proportions of farm owners, higher proportions of native born heads of families, larger gross incomes, more periodicals taken, more books owned and borrowed, greater tendency to vote, more hours of radio auditing, of reading, and more kinds of recreation are apparently associated with high organization affiliations of families. Other factors, including the composition of the family, the possession of an automobile, a telephone, central heating system, central lighting system, and running water in the home, seem to have little positive relation to organization membership. Church affiliation and attendance and size of farm business resources do not appear to be significantly related; in fact, there is some evidence of a negative relationship.

According to all methods of analysis the factors pertaining to education and to cultural advancement, including periodicals taken, books owned, books borrowed, schooling of the operator, and time spent in radio auditing and in reading, apparently are among the most significant. But these things are merely related to or associated with organization behavior and cannot be regarded as causal factors in the situation. They may be the effects of other more basic causes. For example, a large number of periodicals taken and a high organization affiliation per family may both be results which go back to other parent reasons. There can be little doubt, however, that the whole cultural background and experience of a locality and of a family have much to do in shaping the patterns of organization response on the part of the people concerned.

Mutual influence of group and personality. In the introduction to the neighborhood chapter, Professor Cooley was quoted as saying that personality cannot exist without association or fellowship, and that human nature itself is but a trait of primary groups. Obviously, therefore, it is important to realize some-

thing of the mutual influence of the group and the person. One cannot exist without the other. The more important spheres of primary group life, Professor Cooley points out, are the family, the neighborhood, and the play group.

Some people have become concerned with recent tendencies in modern rural life, saying that the drift from primary or personal to secondary or impersonal forms of contact and from local neighborhood to the many different kinds of voluntary associations, or special interest organizations, endangers personality. They fear it will become distraught, pulled apart, by the many and diverse demands of widely different and separate group fealties. May it not be, however, that the presence of various interest groups offers an opportunity rather than a danger? Professor Cooley recognized that interest groups as well as locality groups can be either primary or face-to-face in character, else why did he include the play group in his classification? Various facets or sides of personality can be burnished and brightened by varied group contacts. Fortunately all of life need not be confined to one locality in days of rapid transit. Problems there will be, but there were personality and group problems in the days of the pioneer neighborhood. Different times bring different problems but also more opportunities for rural organizations. This idea finds expression in Miss Follett's call for group organization as a basis for new methods in politics. She says: "The reason we want organization is not to keep people within their neighborhoods, but to get them out."¹

Professor J. K. Hart describes this mutual relationship which may exist between different interest groups and personality in the following fine statement: "Every membership in a new group brings some distinctive new touch to the personality of the individual. If he can find his way around the range of humanizing groups, he will thus find his way around into all the distinctive phases of humanity and he will become a complete human being."²

¹ Follett, M. P., *The New State, Group Organization the Solution of Popular Government*, p. 249. Longmans, Green & Co., 1918.

² Hart, J. K. "Belonging to Too Many Groups," *Survey*, March 15, 1924.

It is entirely possible, however, that the tendency toward multiplication of special interest groups which has been traced in this chapter may swing to an extreme. Some persons say that it has already done so.² Extreme specialization and division of labor may result in such complexity that common ground will be difficult to find. Conflicting loyalties within the same individual, or overlapping authorities of special *ad hoc* governmental districts may lead to confusion. An accumulation of highly specialized and professionalized services in small rural communities may "bog down" their whole financial structure. These are problems which will be dealt with in Chapter XXIV, "Community Organization and Local Government."

INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF RURAL GROUPS

Finally a brief summary is presented of the interrelationships of the various groups in rural society which have thus far been studied. The family is the point from which to start.

First there are genetic groups, the individual family and the great family, which trace back to natural origins. The family group is difficult to classify because, for the adult members it is, in origin at least, a voluntary association, while for the younger members who are born into it, it is a genetic or natural group. Second, there are locality groups, neighborhoods, villages and communities, which occupy a territorial area and which have an ecology or "mutual relation with their environments," as the biologists would phrase it. And third, there are special interest groups.

Two significant changes in the relationships of families with these various groups have taken place. First is the transfer in emphasis from locality to interest as a major basis for group formation and solidarity. In the settlement days nationality and kinship coupled with isolation, due to restricted travel,

² Taylor, H. C., *Proceedings of the American Country Life Association*, 1936, p. 144, "Education for Democracy." University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

laid the foundation for the neighborhood as a primary locality group. Then, special interests became recognized and could be satisfied only by the establishment of some organization, the formation of some association, or the promotion of some activity. Locality, however, continues to play its part, since certain types of special interest groups still form in certain local areas. For example, 4-H clubs, homemakers' and mothers' clubs are more likely to be found on the neighborhood scale. Size and proximity are important factors because such groups tend to be small and restricted in membership to neighboring families; they are also personal or primary in nature.

Local interest groups may become the axis about which the life of the family group turns, provided there is sufficient identity of interest. If not, then members of the family seek their satisfactions in more scattered groups, non-localized or non-neighborhood in character. In this event the older locality influence wanes and the newer, special interest waxes stronger. In some cases, therefore, locality as represented in neighborhood and interest as represented in activity or organization are co-ordinate. In other cases they are divergent. This accounts for the rise and the fall, the little more or the little less, as well as the interplay of these two main influences.

The second important change in interrelationships of rural groups is the more frequent and the more intimate association of members of the family with groups outside its local neighborhood and beyond its own immediate interests. Local, personal or primary groups are not enough. Farm families are aligning themselves with other families to form the larger rural community of town and country and the wider interests of a modern society. This wider movement is taking place on a locality as well as on an interest basis as the diagram (Figure 28) seeks to show.¹ The wider locality contacts are in town-country communities and in rural-urban areas, while the wider interest associations are seen in such activities as breeders'

¹ Kolb, J. H., *Family Life and Rural Organization*, p. 146. Adapted with permission from the Publications of the American Sociological Society. vol. XXIII, 1929.

associations, county health committees and in numerous voluntary associations, some organized on the community scale and others on the still wider scale of rural-urban relationships.

The practical implications of such changing relationships are many and they are of great importance to rural society and its leaders. Groups are always in process of change, some in short and some in long-time cycles, depending on many

factors. Leaders who resist instead of taking advantage of the changing desires of their group members and of the more general trends of the times, soon find themselves in trouble; they may be bitter because, as they say, "the world is all against us," and, as a matter of fact, it is. Organizations and societies may easily outlive their usefulness, but still attempt to persist. On the other hand, if readjustments are continually attempted, new methods sought, new causes espoused, new group alignments made, then rural society, through its

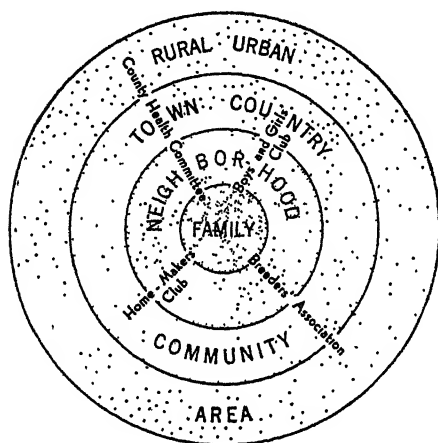


FIG. 28. A THEORETICAL GRAPH SHOWING THE FAMILY, ITS NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMUNITY AND INTEREST GROUP RELATIONSHIPS

The diagram suggests the interrelationships of the family group and its members with such special interest groups as homemakers' club, breeders' association, boys' and girls' 4-H club, and county health committee, as well as with locality groups, as neighborhood, town-country community, and rural-urban areas

Source: Kolb, J. H., *Trends of Country Neighborhoods: A Restudy of Rural Primary Groups, 1921-1931*, Research Bulletin 120, November, 1933, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison

primary locality and its primary interest groups, as well as through its larger community and urban connections, may become dynamic, articulate, and group-conscious in the constructive sense, to the end that its interests, its objectives, and its future may be respected and made serviceable in the larger drama of national life.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Write a case history or life story of some special interest group or organization which you know by first-hand contacts, such, for example, as a social club, a parent-teacher association, a co-operative marketing organization, a young people's society, a fraternity or sorority. Give special attention to the following points.
 - a. Reasons and circumstances surrounding its origin.
 - b. How members are recruited.
 - c. What kind of leaders are chosen.
 - d. Plans for keeping members loyal.
 - e. Difficulties with other groups.
 - f. Conflicts within the group.
 - g. Readjustments made to overcome difficulties.
 - h. Evidences of permanence or decline.
2. Make a list of all the social organizations such as community club, Grange, Union, Farm Bureau, parent-teacher association, 4-H Club, etc., which have members in a rural locality, with which you are acquainted. Do you think there are enough, too many or too few such organizations there? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Outline the social and the organization plan and policy of one of the national farmers' organizations, as the Grange, Farmers' Union, Farm Bureau, or of a state or national breeders' association.
4. Outline the rural and the organization plan and policy of one educational, social, or fraternal organization, as the parent-teacher association, the Kiwanis, Rotary, or other service club, the Royal Neighbors, P.E.O., or any other state or national organization of these types.
5. Enumerate and discuss briefly the social forces which have given rise to special interest groups in rural society.
6. What problems do interest groups create for a local community?

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CHAPTER VII

RURAL - URBAN RELATIONSHIPS

OUT at the end of the road stands the city with its smokestacks and its jagged sky line. The traffic on that great American highway moves in two directions — toward the city and toward the country. Moreover, it is not simply a physical highway for the transport of goods and people, but an open channel for the interplay of ideas and attitudes. Ten and fifteen years ago students of rural society were not so conscious of urban influences upon rural life; they were more concerned with the great cityward drift of country people. Present day studies of rural social organization, however, cannot fail to recognize the importance of the city.

Farmers, villagers and their families have many direct contacts with urban centers, and conversely, city dwellers are in closer touch with rural affairs than they were formerly. Indirect contacts between city and country, more subtle in character, have likewise multiplied greatly, and they are determining more and more the form and content of rural life and agriculture. Among these indirect forces are not only the radio, the moving pictures, the daily newspaper, the weekly or monthly magazine with national advertising, but also those other forms of control and policy-making which are inherent in plans for linking local institutions such as stores, banks, churches or schools with centralized agencies whose leadership and headquarters are located in distant city centers.

Finally, the great flow and ebb of millions of country people into the cities and back again has made profound changes in rural-urban relationships. This action and reaction of mobility and of contacts have continued long enough to make many general differences between rural and urban centers less pronounced. Changes and adjustments have been made in mer-

chandising practices, in type of agriculture, in forms of social activities and even in those population characteristics by which rural and urban were formerly distinguished. Now many differences may be found within urban or within rural populations which are greater than those existing between the two. Hence, the old dichotomy of society into rural and urban has less and less meaning as a method for comparison and study. Rural and urban are becoming more relative terms which can be scaled by gradients out from a city center.

THE RISE OF CITY CENTERS

A background or cyclorama for viewing changing rural-urban relationships in perspective is essential. This can be found in the dramatic story of the rapid rise of American cities and metropolitan areas. Since 1880 the percentage of population classed as urban has nearly doubled. For each of the last three census decades there was an ever-increasing concentration of population into city centers and their immediate environs. The Census Bureau published a report for 1930 outlining 96 metropolitan areas, each with a city center of at least 100,000 population.¹ These 96 districts contained 44.6 per cent of the national population, which means that in 1930 nearly half the people of the United States had almost daily access to a city of 100,000 or more. To be sure, there was included in these districts or zones ranging from twenty to fifty miles in extent a large population which by regular census definition would be called "rural," but, as will be shown in the last section of this chapter, many of its characteristics are more urban than rural.

The rapid rise of cities and the consequent concentration of population is not a matter of haphazard geographic arrangement. There is a tendency for such concentrations to occur at the water fronts, especially along the Atlantic seaboard and in the Great Lakes region.

¹ United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Metropolitan Districts, Population and Area*, 1932.

TABLE 21. POPULATION CONCENTRATION IN A ZONE EXTENDING APPROXIMATELY 50 MILES INLAND FROM THE SEABOARD AND THE GREAT LAKES, 1900-1930 * †

Census Year	Population Within Zone	Per cent of Total U.S. Population in Zone	Increase Within Zone Since Preceding Census	Per cent of Total U.S. Increase Within Zone
1900	27,842,288	36.6	5,495,234	42.1
1910	35,633,796	38.7	7,791,508	48.8
1920	43,865,221	41.5	8,231,425	59.9
1930	55,413,567	45.1	11,548,346	67.7

* Compiled from *U.S. Census Reports*. The table is computed on county units by the author, R. D. McKenzie, Chapter IX, "The Rise of Metropolitan Communities," *Recent Social Trends*.

† The area of the zone is 435,863 square miles, or 14.65 per cent of total land area of the United States. It may be defined as a region approximately fifty miles wide which skirts the salt water rim of the country and the southern shores of Lakes Ontario, Erie and Michigan.

The population movement toward the deep-water rim does not, of course, spread itself evenly over the whole bordering territory, but reconcentrates itself in large cities. Such concentration during the last two census decades is impressive.

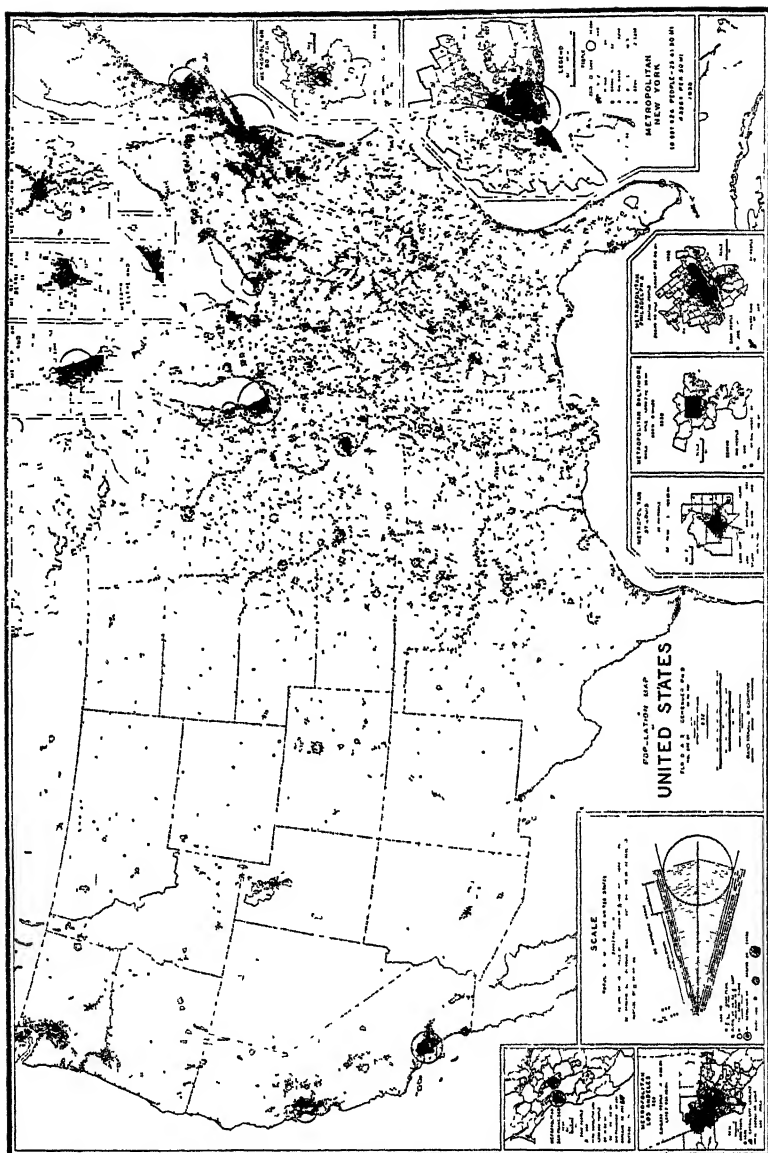
A second significant trend in growth of cities is what Professor McKenzie calls the "Metropolitan Constellation." Large cities, he explains, seldom appear isolated or alone, but always surrounded by a cluster of smaller centers of varying size with which they are closely related in a sort of complex. Table 22 shows the number and size of places found within the metropolitan web of eleven large centers.

TABLE 22. INCORPORATED PLACES OF SPECIFIED SIZE IN SELECTED METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS, 1930 * †

Size of Place	New York	Pittsburgh	Chicago	Philadelphia	Boston	Los Angeles	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Detroit	Cleveland	San Francisco
Less than 2,500.....	112	57	59	43	10	10	27	23	13	24	14
2,500-4,999.. . . .	49	26	16	25	14	13	4	9	11	5	6
5,000-9,999.. . . .	49	23	15	14	17	13	8	7	6	4	8
10,000-49,999.....	48	27	18	7	30	16	7	3	8	5	7
50,000-99,999... . .	8	1	5	1	5	2	1	1	4	2	1
100,000 and over...	6	1	2	2	4	2	1	1	1	1	2
Total.....	272	135	115	92	80	56	48	44	43	41	38

* Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *Metropolitan District*.

† *Ibid.*, McKenzie.



The accompanying map indicates also the tendency toward concentration in metropolitan units, and the location of such clusters along the important water fronts.

The commercial interdependence of the central city and its satellites can be shown from reports of the Census of Distribution for 1930. If we take Chicago as an example, three zones can be marked off: the first, with a 20-mile radius from the loop, contains 21 smaller cities; the second, 20 to 40 miles out, has six centers, and the third, 40 to 80 miles away, includes ten cities. A comparison of the average number of persons per store and the average expenditures per store for food, wearing apparel and general merchandise, indicates that the influence of the central city gradually tapers off.

The tendency to form large metropolitan clusters is not wholly inspired by commerce and industry. Certain other advantages accrue to a center of high specialization and great division of labor. Such centers attract those types of social institutions, and those leaders in the professions and in the arts and the sciences who contribute to and benefit from highly differentiated services. Large cities possess almost unlimited opportunities for diversification and specialization, not only for business and commerce but for amusements and for social and professional contacts. This constitutes an important corollary attraction or "lure" of the city.

Metropolitan influences, however, extend beyond immediate circling cities to rural areas, and this is an important reason for knowledge of city development and influence on the part of students of rural society. One means of showing the more general zones or regions of metropolitan influence is by mapping daily newspaper circulation areas. This is done in Figure 30, and changes between 1920 and 1929 are shown.

Cities used as centers in the newspaper circulation map include the Federal Reserve Banking Centers, both headquarters and branches, together with six others, making a total of 41 regions. Each region is an area in which 50 per cent or more of the newspaper circulation comes from the particular center.

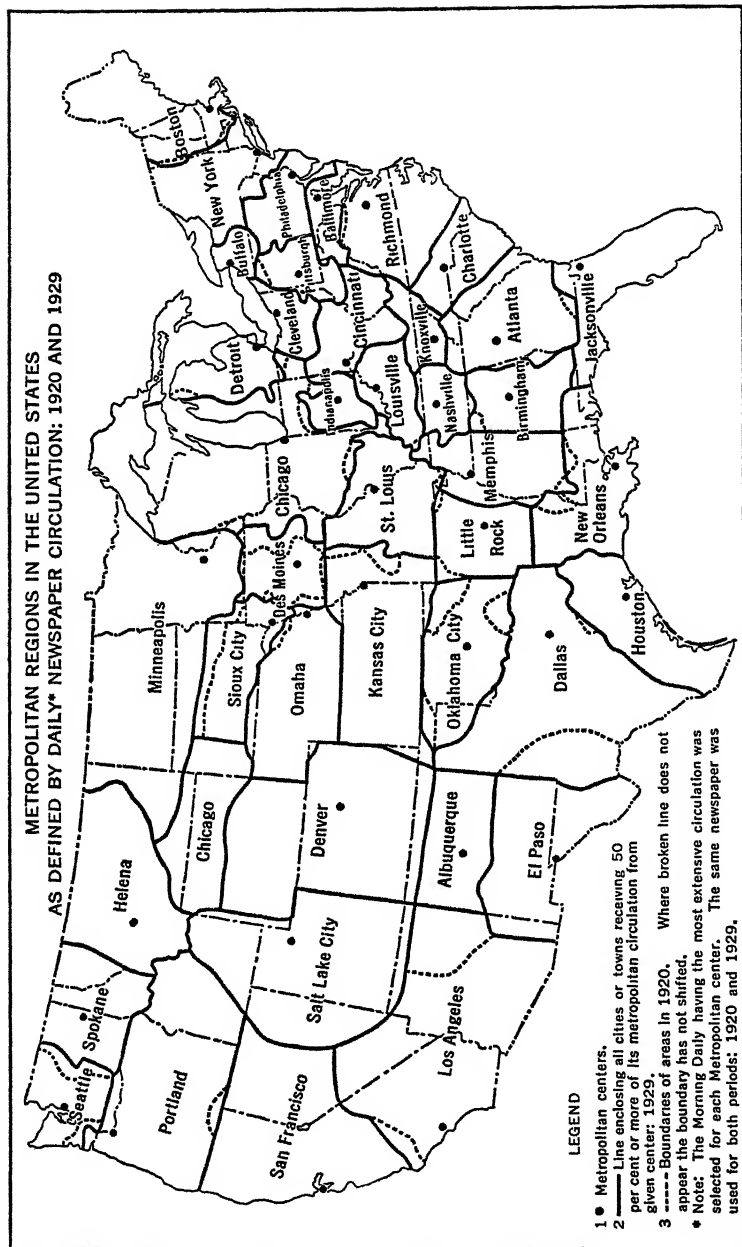


FIG. 30. METROPOLITAN REGIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AS DEFINED BY DAILY NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION: 1920 AND 1929

Source: *Recent Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

Other services determining metropolitan regions of influence are those of trade, including wholesaling, of industry, and of financing. Because of motor transportation, with truck and delivery service, there is apparently a tendency for certain functions to cumulate in the dominant centers and for others to gravitate to the sub-centers. Thus, there is a sort of regional economy evolving, whereby certain self-sufficiency or independence is being sought in such matters as industries, markets, and financial control. Small cities tend to fit into the region of which they are a part, or, if they are too far removed from large centers, attempt to assume functions similar to those of the intermediate cities. Professor Gras describes the process as follows:

Just as the development of towns in town economy displays steps or phases, so does the growth of metropolitan economy illustrate certain steps which stand out more or less clearly. In the first part of the growth we see the prospective center reach out its tentacles by land and sea to secure supplies and to sell goods. It creates a situation and a feeling of dependence, although its means of exploitation are strictly limited. In short, it begins to organize the market. Then comes the development of manufacturing and transportation. In many parts of America these two grew up hand in hand, and with them, but lagging a bit behind, came the close financial knitting together of the whole area.¹

There are those who would argue that this slowly forming metropolitan region may become a rival in economic administration and control to the present political system based upon federal, state, and county units. The city is more than a congeries of streets, buildings, telephones, people and service institutions, as Professor Burgess well points out. He adds:

The city is rather a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition. In other words, the city is not merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction. It is involved in the vital processes of the people who compose it; it is a product of nature, and particularly of human nature.²

¹ Burgess, E. W., *The Urban Community*, p. 183. University of Chicago Press, 1926.

² Park and Burgess, *The City*. p. 1. University of Chicago Press, 1925.

If this "state of mind" and "organized attitude" does follow the mechanisms of trade, market and finance out into the larger metropolitan regions already described, then rural society will soon assume vastly different aspects. The mutual impacts of rural and urban ways of life will be considered in the next section, but the point of the present argument is that rural and urban are not separate entities, and that students of rural society need to familiarize themselves with the rise, the development, and the influence of cities and metropolitan areas.

THE INTERACTION OF RURAL AND URBAN

Certain characteristics or traits have traditionally been associated with rural and with urban populations. The question naturally arises, what will be the future results of the greater interaction of the two groups? With the freer contacts and the increased mobility, will the city urbanize the country or will the country ruralize the city? From the evidence of present trends, there seems to be little immediate likelihood that all differences will be obliterated. There can be no doubt, however, that many of them will be greatly modified. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that there are many common traits which are neither rural nor urban. In the great population movements to be described in the next chapter, first from rural to urban, prior to 1929, and then from urban to rural in the following five years, the question is, which traits have been sloughed off and which have been rendered more common? What will be the effects of efforts to decentralize industry and population, and to move city workers to "garden plots" and subsistence homesteads?

It has been suggested that rural and urban are now more relative terms than they were, which is only another way of saying that a process is under way which is modifying wide differences and distinguishing characteristics. Before examining the resulting pattern or design, the process itself should be studied a little more thoroughly. The implication is that

it is a two-way action or process, which, at the risk of oversimplifying and over-popularizing, will be termed "urbanization" and "ruralization." These terms are widely used, but often with so little discrimination that it is important to examine their implications.

Urbanization. To urbanize means to transfer the characteristics of a city. Direct and indirect contacts have, without doubt, made country and city more alike in many respects, but to say that the city has deliberately, octopus-like, fixed its features upon the country, is an exaggeration. The city is not sufficiently organized and unified to do this, although it is quite evident that certain city groups and enterprises have proceeded with that aim. That both country and city are exposed on a grander scale to the influences of mechanical invention, mass production, and centralized control would be a more exact statement. Often the city acts as the earlier laboratory and then is used as the diffusion or propagation center. To say that an invention comes out of a city, however, does not prove that it is of the city.

The clearest evidence of direct rural contacts with urban centers is, of course, in the commercial field, where it is easy to observe and to record. For example, among 1328 Middle-West farm families surveyed in 1930 by *Successful Farming* of Des Moines, it was found that the average distances traveled to make purchases of hardware, farm machinery, groceries, and automobile accessories, varied from 5.9 to 7.8 miles. (The results of this study will be given in greater detail in Chapter XXI dealing with retail merchandising.) The average distance traveled for furniture, however, was 14 miles, and for women's ready-to-wear, 19.5 miles. The last two items were procured by the greatest number of families (31 and 47 per cent) in places of from 2500 to 10,000. Cities of more than 10,000 secured the trade for these two items from one eighth and one sixth of all families respectively, although they attracted but one twentieth of the families for other goods. In other words, centers of various sizes attract to their stores only that proportion of the families who live within their pri-

mary sphere of influence, and the goods which are bought at such centers pertain directly to the farm or to daily living. When clothing and other specialties are purchased, then the larger places have a far greater attraction. In this way some of the apparent differences between the countryman and the cityman have partially disappeared; both buy their clothes at the same city stores.

Indirect contacts are more subtle in influence, as was emphasized before. The invasion of city practices, finance, and control into rural banking, rural storekeeping, and village manufacturing plants was evident over and over again when specific rural communities were restudied after a lapse of ten years. Social institutions and agencies were not immune to urbanization. Outside influences were playing upon rural schools, and within the local churches the force of administrative boards dominated by urban points of view was constantly felt. Similarly, luncheon clubs, parent-teacher associations, men's clubs and women's clubs, receive from their regional, state or national offices more and more suggestions new to the rural world. Such indirect influences are not limited to institutional and organizational contacts. Wherever tests were made, rural people were found to be subscribing to city newspapers twice as frequently in 1930 as in 1925. The radio, too, is exerting an immeasurable influence. In 1925, 4.3 per cent of the farmers had radios; in 1930 the figure was 20.8 per cent. In that year two fifths of the villagers also possessed them.

This simultaneous exposure of rural and urban people to the intruding radio, the city-edited newspaper, and the silver screen can hardly fail to iron out some of the mental curves of difference between the two groups. The modulating effects upon population characteristics and upon agricultural practices will become evident in the next section of the chapter. Furthermore, the great backward flow of people from cities to farms and villages which began in 1929, is of significance. It reduced the average age of the country population because many younger people returned, and many others did not leave the country.

Dr. Baker estimates that, should the movement from farms and to farms balance during the decade 1930 to 1940, there will be about 30 per cent more men 20 to 45 years of age on farms in 1940 than in 1930.¹ This is likely to contribute to an increased birth rate, already evident when 1933 is compared with 1930. Other important questions are, what attitudes did these people who return to the country bring with them, and do they intend to remain in the country?

Ruralization. To ruralize means to impart a rural character or aspect. If there has been urbanization of the country there has also been ruralization of the city. The urban movement reached its height during the first thirty years of the century. Those were the years of city building, the increasing use of the automobile, extension of mechanical power, and of telephone and radio improvement. It is estimated that in the decade 1920 to 1930 nearly twenty million farm people migrated to the cities. Certainly these millions did not shed all of their ideas, attitudes and ways of living at the city gates, as some writers have implied in their great emphasis upon the urbanization of the country.

Even superficial observation, as for example from a roof-garden of a city apartment house several hundred feet above the ground, provides evidences of ruralization. The roof-garden itself is reversion to a country form of living. There over the ledge can be seen a front porch, a suspended line with drying clothes, flower boxes gay with color, formalized pines at an entrance across the street, a dog in his runway on another flat roof, and beyond, a cat sunning herself contentedly. In the outskirts, past the "downtown" districts, many other country scenes greet the understanding eye. The more trenchant implications of the rural-urban migration as a phase of rural-urban relationships to be discussed more fully in Chapter X, have been summarized in a few sentences by Sorokin, Zimmerman and Galpin. Regarding the cityward trend, they say: "The characteristics of the rural population are car-

¹ Baker, O. E., *Rural-Urban Migration and the National Welfare*. Published by the Association of American Geographers, 1933, vol. XXIII, p. III.

ried into the city by each new generation of migrants. The spiritual and moral convictions, the habits of life, and the personal traits of the rural population, whether good or bad, are constantly being injected into the culture that obtains in the city."

Then there is the reverse movement. Regarding this countryward trend these authors add, "a small stream of migrants continues to go from city to country. These representatives of the city carry with them the culture and characteristics, the good and the bad of the urban centers to the country." They conclude, "In the long run the city gains more by this process than it loses."¹

There are various evidences of the reaction of rural culture upon urban life. An interesting example is that of the rural practices which carry over into the administration and conduct of city churches. By carefully devised measurements Dr. Douglass is able to identify city churches of rural origin and to determine the extent to which adjustments have been made to urban conditions. He suggests that city churches as a group vary all the way from extreme simplicity to great complexity of program, and the explanation is they are getting away more and more from a rural tradition and moving toward the urban. He estimates that 25 per cent or more of city churches which are least developed are no larger and no more highly organized than the average rural church. He concludes that the city church represents an evolution from a rural parent stock, although its immediate ancestor is the town church.²

Furthermore, just as the countryman has many direct contacts with city life, so there are an ever-expanding number and type of direct contacts for the cityman when he goes to the country: contacts of business, pleasure, hunting, fishing, touring, or the more extended associations of a country home, summer vacation, and rural relatives. It is also estimated that a perceptible amount of agricultural wealth migrates annually

¹ Sorokin, Zimmerman and Galpin, *A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology*, vol. III, p. 534. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

² Douglass, H. Paul, *One Thousand City Churches: Phases of Adaptation to Urban Environment*, chap. IV. George H. Doran Co.

to cities through inheritances, as an illustrative study in Ohio shows.¹ Thus rural and urban are bound by many ties. Communication inventions and the wider use of machines in country and city are important forces in this process.

Rurbanization. To rurbanize means to bring town and country together *en rapport*. This intermediary process is suggested as an explanation of a present trend. It is not merely a figure of speech to say that midway between country and city stands the village or small town, one hand extending toward the country and the other toward the city. It is rather a description of an actual situation. Likewise, the rurban community of town and country manifests many features of a reconciliation between extreme ruralism and extreme urbanism. And finally, the designation of the village or small town as the mid-point toward which the changing characteristics of both country and city populations are approaching, is a representation of present and probable future trends. Rural and urban societies already tend to resemble each other in many respects, a resemblance which may continue as the expression of modern relationships, and this without undue sacrifice of those unique qualities which have characterized their past and which are needed for their future.

THE CHANGING DESIGN OF RURAL-URBAN RELATIONSHIPS

Just as the village or small town is surrounded by its community area, so around the city center are concentric zones of mutual influence. The city does not really end at its legal or corporate limits; its influence and even the characteristics of its people carry over into the area beyond. This is the result of common and continual readjustments, the urban center adapting its functions to a wider circle, and both village and country accommodating themselves to greater conformity with the city. A design or pattern of rural-urban relationships is therefore finally formed which can be mapped and studied.

¹ Tetreau, E. D., *Some Trends in Rural Social Organization in Four Ohio Counties*, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbus, Bulletin 42, November, 1931.

In order to examine such relationships a plan was devised for the analysis of the concentric zones extending out from cities. Eighteen medium-sized cities, scattered throughout the nation, were studied.¹ The county containing the city was called the "city county" and was treated as a whole, that is, the city figures were included in the county totals. In all 347 counties, about 19 to each urban center were involved. Counting the cities, 10.2 per cent of the national population was included. In practically all indices used, the regional and national totals in this sample differed little, if at all, from regional and national totals as given in the United States Census. For convenience, zones were plotted on a county basis, counties contiguous to the urban centers being chosen to represent areas of tributary influence. Wholesale grocery areas mapped in a supplement to the *Market Data Handbook*² were used as guides in selecting counties and in forecasting the points where the influence of other cities might appear. All counties immediately bordering the city county were designated as Tier One Counties; counties bordering the first tier were called Tier Two Counties, and so on, until the concentric character of the entire design was traced.³

This section of the chapter will present first, two measures of rural-urban relationships as they were discovered in a single city, Des Moines, Iowa, in order to make the plan of the entire study more clear. Secondly, a few of the more significant

¹ The population of these cities in 1930 ranged from 20,760 to 634,394. Three were less than 50,000 population. Six had between 50,000 and 80,000; five between 110,000 and 183,000 and four over 300,000. The cities were: Binghamton, New York; Columbia, South Carolina; Des Moines, Iowa; Fargo, North Dakota; Fort Worth, Texas; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Lincoln, Nebraska; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Montgomery, Alabama; Nashville, Tennessee; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Portland, Oregon; Richmond, Virginia; San Francisco, California; Springfield, Illinois; Toledo, Ohio; Wichita, Kansas; Williamsport, Pennsylvania. With the exception of San Francisco, all large metropolitan groups such as New York, Chicago, or Boston, were omitted to avoid, as far as possible, complicating the story of rural-urban relationships by interjecting the factor of suburbanism.

² United States Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Domestic Commerce Series no. 30, 1929.

³ For a more complete statement regarding the method used, the location of the areas and for many more measures than can be included in the chapter, see chapter v and Appendix D in *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

measures for all of the eighteen areas will be grouped under such headings as population, agricultural, trade, and educational relations. To show the changing character of the design, it is necessary to examine not only the situation in 1930, the last year for which complete information is available, but also conditions which prevailed in earlier decades. Comparisons are therefore made for 1910, 1920 and 1930, when possible.

The case of the Des Moines area; an illustration. For the purpose of illustrating the type of measurement and the twofold comparison made in a single area, one item has been selected from population data, fertility, and one from agricultural data, value of field crops per acre.

Fertility may be measured by taking the ratio of children under ten to all women twenty to forty-five. The data for Des Moines show that this ratio is lowest in the city county and increases with each succeeding tier. There appears to be a relationship in any measured unit of population between the birth rate and the distance from the city. This is illustrated in Figure 31. Furthermore, as may be seen in Table 23, this same relationship existed in both 1910 and 1920. It is also clear that in the city county, and in all the others, the ratio has been falling during the two decades prior to 1930. The points of difference between 1910 and 1930 are greater in the city

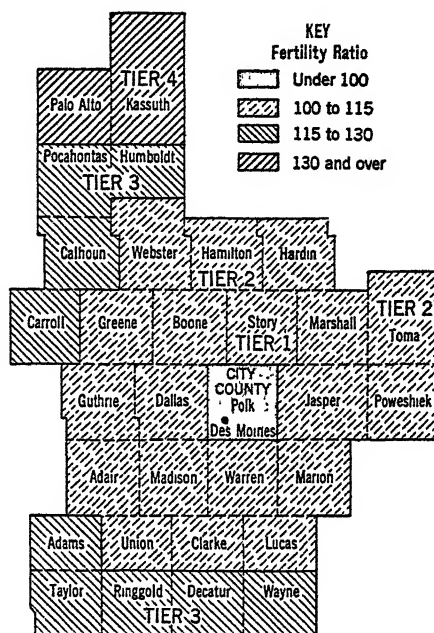


FIG. 31. FERTILITY RATIOS IN THE DES MOINES AREA, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES, 1930

Source: Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*. McGraw-Hill, 1933.

TABLE 23. RATIO OF CHILDREN UNDER 10 TO WOMEN 20 TO 45 YEARS OF AGE IN THE DES MOINES AREA, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
1910....	87.2	119.7	120.1	131.9	153.9
1920..	80.9	115.4	116.0	123.2	142.5
1930..	78.9	107.4	109.6	118.9	135.4

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States 1910, Population*, vol. II; *Fourteenth Census of the United States, Population*, vol. III; *Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, Population*, vol. III, Part I.

county than in any other tier of counties except the fourth, but even here the proportionate decrease is not so great as in the

city itself. This comparison suggests a graduated influence in the operation of forces controlling birth rate as one moves from the urban county to rural counties surrounding it.

Values of field crops per acre may be followed in Table 24. In this Des Moines area the per acre value of crops is highest in the city county, and decreases with distance in the first three tiers, as is shown in Figure 32. The story of agricultural prosperity which culminated in 1920 and the ensuing prolonged depression is told in these figures, for the rise and the fall of values are certainly abrupt.

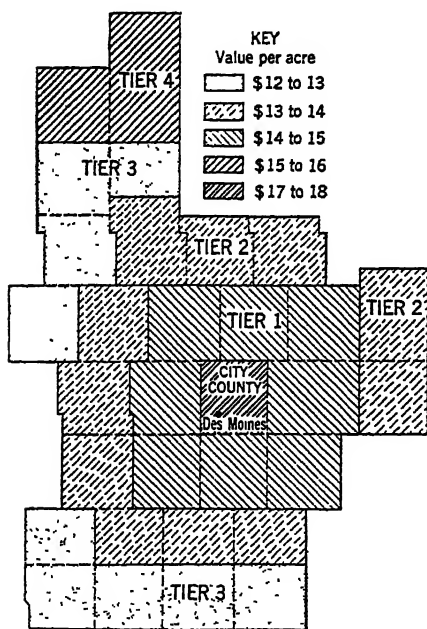


FIG. 32. VALUE PER ACRE OF FIELD CROPS IN THE DES MOINES AREA IN 1930, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES

Source: Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*. McGraw-Hill, 1933.

Other relationships, therefore, can be examined in terms of distance from cities and over periods of time. Other indices

will now be studied from these two points of view, covering the entire eighteen areas selected for study.

TABLE 24. VALUE PER ACRE OF FIELD CROPS IN THE DES MOINES AREA, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES

Year	City County	Tiers of Counties			
		First	Second	Third	Fourth
1910.....	\$11.33	\$ 9.53	\$ 8.73	\$ 7.67	\$ 6.84
1920.....	31.85	27.73	27.24	25.76	26.63
1930.....	17.70	14.29	13.59	12.58	15.12

Source *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, vol. VI; *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Agriculture*, vol. VI; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, vol. I.

Population relations. It is evident from the Des Moines area that the design of rural-urban relationships has at least two important features: first, a gradient character, that is, it tends to show gradual variations as the distance from the urban center increases, and second, a tendency to change with time. Population characteristics vary rather definitely as one proceeds away from or toward the city, but the differences seem to lessen with time.

(1) *Number of children varies directly with distance from urban center.* Children have been the most distinguishing characteristic of rural society, hence it is important, first of all, to compare the changing fertility ratio or the replenishing power of rural and urban population. The ratio of children under ten to women twenty to forty-five increases definitely as Table 25 shows, as one goes away from the city county to outlying tiers. This is true for the total population, but is even more pronounced when the rural population is taken separately. In both instances the tier one counties hold an intermediate position between the city county and tier two counties and those beyond. Proximity of city is related to the replenishing power of the population, and the gradient character of this design is evident in every region, although there are some variations from state to state.

Similar results are secured when the effective birth rate is calculated in terms of the number of children under 1 year of age for each 1000 population. Rural districts have a consist-

ently higher proportion of such births, the figure increasing as the outer tiers of counties are reached. Thus, it is apparent that the farm is still the seed-bed of America, but it is equally clear that this function is not distributed equally among all country districts: their distance from urban centers causes variations.

TABLE 25. RATIO OF CHILDREN UNDER 10 TO WOMEN 20 TO 45 YEARS OF AGE IN THE TOTAL AND IN THE RURAL POPULATION, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES — 18 AREAS

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
Total population					
1910	93.5	133.5	139.7	141.8	156.9
1920	90.8	125.8	134.1	136.2	142.8
1930	84.7	119.6	125.2	124.2	126.0
Rural population					
1910	138.1	144.3	148.2	152.2	163.5
1920	130.9	139.2	144.0	147.0	150.9
1930	123.4	131.8	136.3	137.4	134.5

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, vols. II and III; *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Population*, vol. III, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, vol. III.

An interesting question arises at this point; namely, what is the relation between birth rates and population growth? The answer is that a negative relationship prevails between birth rates and the growth of population, and what is more important, this inverse relationship increases with the distance from the city.¹ This suggests that population growth in any area is, after all, more a matter of migration than natural rate of increase. According to this line of reasoning, those counties removed from urban centers may not expect to grow by virtue of relatively larger families. Their function is to rear children to restock the city counties.

(2) *Birth rates begin to equalize between rural and urban.* Declining birth rates and fertility ratios are recognized national phenomena, but it has not been realized that the rate of decline is greatest in those counties removed from cities. Rates of decline calculated upon the basis of the fertility ratios given in

¹ See *Rural Social Trends*, p. 119. Series of correlations showing this relationship.

the preceding table are brought together in Table 26 for both total and rural population in the eighteen selected areas. The greater rate of decline in fertility rates for the outer tiers of counties suggests that the general decline in birth rates which has been noted, probably began later in these outlying counties. If this continues, the future may see less difference between rural and urban groups, in which case rural America will be making a smaller proportional contribution to the population of the nation than it has in the past.

TABLE 26. RATE OF DECLINE IN FERTILITY RATIOS FOR TOTAL AND FOR RURAL POPULATION BETWEEN 1910 AND 1930

	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
Total population	9.5	10.4	10.4	12.4	19.6
Rural population	10.6	8.7	8.0	9.7	17.7

(3) *Age groups vary definitely from tier to tier.* Both birth rate and migration are closely related to and influenced by the changing age distribution of the population, in rural as well as urban areas. Two age comparisons are presented in tabular form, first the proportion under 10 years, and second, the proportion of those 21 to 45, in the total and the rural population. These appear in Tables 27 and 28.

TABLE 27. PROPORTION OF CHILDREN UNDER 10 YEARS OF AGE IN THE TOTAL AND IN THE RURAL POPULATION, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES
— 18 AREAS

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
Total population					
1910.	19.2	22.7	23.4	23.9	25.5
1920.	19.1	22.1	22.8	23.2	23.8
1930.	17.7	20.2	20.9	21.0	21.6
Rural population					
1910.	22.6	23.6	24.2	23.6	26.1
1920.	22.6	23.0	23.6	24.0	24.7
1930.	21.0	21.1	21.7	21.8	22.3

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, vols II and III; *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Population*, vol. III; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, vol. III.

TABLE 28. PROPORTION 21 TO 45 YEARS OF AGE IN THE TOTAL AND IN THE RURAL POPULATION, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES — 18 AREAS

Years	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
Total population					
1920.....	40.0	33.4	32.9	33.4	34.2
1930.....	38.9	32.6	32.2	32.7	34.0
Rural population					
1920.....	34.3	32.3	32.0	32.3	33.8
1930.....	34.3	31.3	31.0	31.3	33.2

Source: *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Population*, vol. III; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, vol. III.

From these tables it is quite evident that there are graduated differences between rural and urban, depending again on proximity or remoteness to cities. Rural and urban are matters of degree. Age composition of the population is convincing evidence, since rural tiers of counties have a consistently larger proportion under 10 years and under 21 years. At the other end of the scale, rural counties have a greater proportion of people over 45 years than the city county. For the under-ten group the gradation by tiers, both for total and rural population, is definite as the distance from the urban centers is increased, especially for 1910 and 1920. When rural population is divided into its two component parts, farm and non-farm (the majority of which is village), the trend for the farm group is consistent, as anticipated. The increase from the city county (20.7) to tier one (21.6) continues to tier four (23.0), and the trend remains significantly uniform when the national totals are slipped into regional divisions. Rural non-farm population, however, shows no appreciable variation when passing from tier to tier; children are native to farms, not to villages.

The proportion of youth from ten to twenty-one years of age shows tendencies similar to those under ten, but in less marked degree. Here are seen the effects of the migration of youth to cities. In the group 21 to 45 years, however, a reversal of this trend is apparent, the city county being high, with a sharp tapering off until tier four is reached, when there is some indication of an upturn.

(4) *Population is aging and with fewer gradations between rural and urban.* Census figures for both total and rural population show definite tendencies for the average age to increase. The first indication of this is in the changing proportion of the children under 10 years of age in the total population, the decline being rather slight between 1910 and 1920 when the rural tiers were compared with the city county, but decidedly marked between 1920 and 1930. Twenty years of decrease in the proportion of children under 10 years of age cannot fail to have its effect upon the upper age registers. While the proportion still increases with distance from the urban center, points of difference tend to lessen steadily. In like manner, the rural population of the city county showed smaller variations from the rural tiers in 1930 than in 1910. It is as though the ages under ten were approaching a constant, and the proportion was adjusting itself to lower city levels. Thus, urban, village and farm populations are growing more alike, and with the tendencies noted for the younger age groups, can hardly fail to continue to do so.

Agricultural relations. Many comparisons were made for agriculture and its changing relations considered from the standpoint of proximity or remoteness to urban centers. Such comparisons show that the distance from the city is as potent in agricultural affairs as it proved to be in population characteristics, although it has probably received less recognition. Trends in such agricultural relations measured by tiers and by decades will be summarized under four headings: land in farms, its ownership, its value, and its uses.

(1) *Proportion of land in farms decreasing near cities.* The general tendency for the proportion of land in farms to decrease in the east and south and to increase in the far west, between 1910 and 1930, was very evident in the eighteen groups of counties selected for special study. When all were combined, as in Table 29, an unmistakable trend was found: the per cent of all land in farms decreased more rapidly near the city than far away from it. The city county was inclined to use more land for non-agricultural purposes, such as industrial or sub-

urban development, and the land values were higher because of this urban expansion. Such land as was employed for farming was cultivated more intensively near the urban center. There was a tendency also for farms to increase in size with the distance from the urban center. The discussion of agriculture as an occupation will show that there has been a general trend for small farms and large farms to increase, but it is clear from these rural-urban comparisons that this is not simply a matter of eastern industrialization and western expansion, but also a question of distance from cities.

TABLE 29. PROPORTION IN FARMS OF ALL LAND, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES
— 18 AREAS

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
1910	74.5	78.6	76.9	73.9	65.4
1920	70.7	76.0	75.8	73.4	65.7
1930	65.2	72.5	73.5	71.6	66.6

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, vols. VI and VII; *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Agriculture*, vol. VI; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, vol. II.

(2) *Trends in ownership of land reversed in terms of distance from city.* Nationally the tendency was for tenancy to rise, but in 1910, as Table 30 indicates, the proportion of owner-operated farms increased consistently with the distance from the city. Between 1910 and 1920 the proportion remained the same in the city county, but declined in all tiers. Between 1920 and 1930, the proportion increased in the city county, but decreased in the tiers. Therefore, by 1930 the trend had reversed and owner-operation decreased as one moved away from the city.

TABLE 30. PROPORTION OF FARMS OPERATED BY OWNERS, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES — 18 AREAS

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
1910	57.7	62.1	63.5	64.2	66.5
1920	57.6	60.8	61.2	61.6	60.4
1930	60.9	60.4	60.3	58.9	56.0

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, vols. VI and VII; *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Agriculture*, vol. VI; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, vol. II.

(3) *Indebtedness increased more sharply in outer tiers.* Ownership is more than a question of title to land. Mortgage indebtedness has been an important consideration in the whole process of inflation and deflation of land values, and it is evident that the maladjustments increased with distance from urban centers. Table 31 shows the general tendency for the number of farms under mortgage to increase and for the proportion to remain lowest in the city county for each of the decades. The situation then, is that farmers operating farms removed from urban centers have not only to earn a livelihood for their families, but also to pay high interest charges to their creditors. Further analysis of the ratio of indebtedness to land values indicates still more the handicap under which these farmers were operating. From 1920 to 1930 the change was significant, from 30.4 per cent to 40.3 per cent, an increase of almost one third, primarily the result of declining values rather than increasing mortgages. The ratio of debt to value rose sharply when urban counties were compared with rural tiers.

TABLE 31. PROPORTION OF FARMS MORTGAGED, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES
— 18 AREAS

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
1910	33.2	36.3	35.3	38.0	43.4
1920	36.7	38.4	38.4	41.4	47.2
1930	41.3	43.8	43.8	46.1	52.7

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, vols. VI and VII; *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Agriculture*, vol. VI; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, vol. II.

(4) *Values of farm property have wide fluctuations.* Per acre value of all farm property in the eighteen areas increased over 80 per cent between 1910 and 1920, but decreased over 28 per cent from 1920 to 1930. This rise and fall was far from uniform, as Table 32 clearly indicates.

The percentage of rise and fall is most significant because the actual figures for values measured in dollars may not give the whole story. In the south and middle west the variations created acute problems, and the uneven distribution of changes

indicates that the greatest difficulties were experienced in the tiers of counties removed from the city. In the fourth tier, values more than doubled from 1910 to 1920, but lagged in the subsequent retrenchment movement. When farm property is separated into its constituents, land, buildings, machinery, and other implements, it is evident that deflation was primarily a condition of decreasing land values. The proportion of farm property in land remained fairly constant from tier to tier, but decreased in the city county, which means that there are relatively higher investments in farm buildings near the city.

TABLE 32. PERCENTAGES OF INFLATION AND DEFLATION IN THE PER ACRE VALUE OF ALL FARM PROPERTY BY TIERS OF COUNTIES
— 18 AREAS

Region and Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Third Per cent	Fourth Per cent
All regions					
1910 to 1920.	+ 55	+ 84	+ 82	+ 91	+107
1920 to 1930.	- 7	- 23	- 30	- 30	- 20
South					
1910 to 1920.	+ 92	+120	+111	+117	+122
1920 to 1930.	- 17	- 28	- 32	- 15	- 13
Middle West					
1910 to 1920	+ 55	+ 80	+ 80	+100	+125
1920 to 1930	- 10	- 33	- 37	- 39	- 34

Source: This table is derived from Table 64, "Value per acre of all farm property by region and by tiers of counties," *Rural Social Trends*, p. 137. The Census of the United States for Agriculture in 1910, 1920, 1930, is the original source.

(5) *Value of all crops and of dairy products by tiers suggests specialization.* The value of all crops considered from decade to decade continues the story of inflation and deflation, but when considered from the standpoint of the tiers of counties it suggests a trend toward specialization as one moves toward the city from the country. The increase in crop values was doubtless responsible for a wider utilization of marginal farm land and for the rise in mortgages, so that when the decline set in the farmers farther from the urban center found themselves saddled with heavier debt and with proportionally less opportunity for paying it.

When vegetable and cereal crops were analyzed by tiers for the three decades, specialization was again apparent. More vegetables were grown, as might be expected, in the city county, near the market. In 1930 this tendency seemed to extend into tier two. Conversely, the percentages of cereal crops increased through the rural tiers, although in 1930 tier two was relatively high. The trend toward specialization was even more evident in the comparison of dairy products per acre for the three periods. All areas taken together showed an increase of 167 per cent from 1910 to 1920 and 20 per cent more from 1920 to 1930, the change being reasonably uniform for all geographic divisions and all tiers. The analysis by tiers, however, reflects the concentration of dairy products within easy trucking distance from the city. The per acre value of dairy products by tiers and by decades, together with its per cent of increase, is given in Table 33.

TABLE 33. VALUE PER ACRE OF DAIRY PRODUCTS, AND RATE OF INCREASE, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES — 18 AREAS

	City County	Tiers of Counties			
		First	Second	Third	Fourth
1910	\$2.11	\$1.23	\$0.91	\$0.74	\$1.06
1920 . . .	5.34	4.07	3.00	2.65	3.03
Per cent increase	153	230	230	258	186

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States 1910, Population*, vols VI and VII; *Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, Population*, vol II

Higher rates of increase for the first three tiers of rural counties may presage a gradual disappearance of the discrepancy between the city county and the rural tiers. Trucks lessen the necessity for having dairy farms concentrated very near to the city. A study of the value of poultry and eggs per acre indicates a significant similarity to this trend in dairy products.

In the South there was a sharp difference in the per cent of dairy products sold in the city and in the country, for each decade. Nevertheless, the increase in sales in 1930 was high and tended to indicate a change in southern farming, perhaps reflecting a growth of manufacturing.

Retail trade relations. Retail trade in the Des Moines area

was studied by use of the 1930 United States Census of Distribution. The average of all retail sales per capita in the Des Moines city county is \$570.25, and for Tiers 1, 2, 3, and 4, \$347.32, \$357.14, \$319.80, and \$315.54 respectively. The city obviously differs from the country, but the variation takes place according to the distance from the city center and reflects, in part at least, increasing rural purchases in the city center, which in census procedure are credited to the city of sale. Food sales vary similarly, beginning with the city county. The percentages are: 18.1, 18.2, 17.4, 13.3, and 14.2. This may reveal the greater self-sufficiency of rural families beyond the first tier. Again, clothing sales per capita in the city county are \$59.02 and for the successive tiers, \$20.25, \$21.83, \$13.06, and \$18.36, indicating an abrupt decline beyond the second tier. Automobile and automotive equipment sales did not follow the other trends, although the city county was high, \$123.24, and all the other tiers nearly uniform: \$86.15, \$89.00, \$82.29, and \$82.50.

Milwaukee and its tributary area was studied from the point of view of population per business establishment in the open country and in places of 2500 or less. This study was based on *Bradstreet's Book of Commercial Ratings* for the years 1910, 1920, and 1930. The results listed in Table 34 indicate a sharp decline in the first tier when compared with the Milwaukee city county, but the figures begin to rise as the fourth tier is passed, suggesting an approach to another city center.

TABLE 34. POPULATION PER BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT IN MILWAUKEE AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES, 1910-1930* †

Year	City County	Tiers of Counties				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
1910	140	60	64	69	72	79
1920	182	56	55	63	68	83
1930	217	58	61	62	59	70

* Compiled from *Bradstreet's Book of Commercial Ratings*, 1910, 1920, and 1930

† *Recent Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933.

Educational relations. Children from 7 to 13 years, the compulsory school ages, attended school in larger proportions in

1930 than in 1920. There was a tendency in 1920 for the proportion to decrease with distance from the urban county. Excluding the south, this tendency had disappeared by 1930, so that the proportions of such children attending school tended towards a constant when the city county and the rural tiers were compared.

Passing from the compulsory to the voluntary school ages of 14 and 15, 16 and 17, and 18 to 20, we can see in Table 35 the trends for the whole nation.

TABLE 35. PROPORTIONS OF SPECIFIED AGE GROUPS IN SCHOOL, BY TIERS OF COUNTIES SURROUNDING CITY CENTERS, 1910-1930 *

Year	City County Per cent	Tiers of Counties			
		First Per cent	Second Per cent	Thrd Per cent	Fourth Per cent
Age 14 and 15					
1920.....	85.2	83.6	84.7	84.6	84.1
1930.....	92.7	88.8	88.6	89.1	89.3
Age 16 and 17					
1920	46.8	49.1	51.4	52.2	54.3
1930	65.4	61.5	60.2	62.7	64.6
Age 18 to 20					
1910	15.3	18.7	19.8	19.1	21.0
1920	17.2	17.8	18.6	18.8	21.1
1930	25.5	24.3	23.1	24.1	28.8

* Data for 1910 not available for first two age groups.

In the 14-15 group the compulsory school age trend is maintained. The city county has a somewhat larger proportion in school, but the difference is not great. The four rural tiers maintain an almost constant ratio for both 1920 and 1930. The proportion of the 16-17 group in school for all areas in 1920 was 49.2; in 1930, it was 62.2, indicating the marked increase in secondary education. In 1920 the city county had a smaller proportion than the non-urban tiers; in fact, there was a tendency for the proportions to increase with distance from the city. By 1930, however, the urban tier had reversed its position, having the largest proportion in school, despite an increase in all tiers. In 1910 the ratio of the 18-20 group in school was significantly less in the urban tier centers than in the rural tiers.

Between 1910 and 1920 higher education increased in the city counties. In 1930 they had surpassed three rural tiers. Variations between urban and rural counties decreased sharply from 1910 to 1930, which indicates that rural-urban differences in higher education are gradually vanishing.

Characterization of the rural-urban design. Rural-urban relationships can now be summarized by tiers of counties or zones of mutual influence as follows: City counties and tier one counties, especially in 1920 and 1930, were likely to have smaller farms devoted to truck crops, fruit and intensive dairying. This necessarily means more compact communities, relatively higher population density, and more frequent contacts of all sorts with the city center. The process has continued long enough so that such counties share increasingly those population characteristics which have been associated with the city; namely, fewer children, more persons in the productive age groups, lower birth rates, and so on, through the list of comparisons which have been presented.

Beyond the first zone, dairying tends to appear accompanied by its various influences. This tendency is especially clear in tier two counties, and to a certain extent in tier three. The value of dairy products increased 230 per cent between 1910 and 1930, and tier three counties appeared to gain even more, because of an unusually low figure in 1910. Tier three areas are naturally intermediate.

Tier four counties and beyond, until the influence of another urban center is encountered, are the outer zone. (In some regions, counties of the third tier have somewhat similar tendencies.) This outer zone has larger farms but fewer acres per farm under cultivation. Cereal crops or cotton are grown by a population of lower density, that is, in larger communities with fewer urban contacts.

Implications of changing rural-urban relationships. The story of rural population and its particular characteristics revolves about the tendency of families in the outer rural tiers to have more children. This is evidenced by fecundity and birth rates, by age distributions, and by sex and the marriage ratios.

Children are a distinguishing characteristic of farm populations removed from cities. The tendency was more pronounced in the last decade, despite the fact that general differences in this regard between rural and urban people were decreasing.

Although the country is likely to contribute fewer young people to the nation in the future, its share will undoubtedly be disproportionately large for some time to come. The ratio of children to persons 20 to 45 years of age is greater in the outer rural tiers than elsewhere. These persons may find it increasingly more difficult to provide an education commensurate with the city county's, which has a greater proportion of people in this productive age group. This is a problem for consideration in the chapter on rural education.

Evidence also pointed to the fact that these outer tiers experienced the most violent fluctuations in property values, both in the period of inflation, 1910 to 1920, and in the time of deflation, 1920 to 1930. Because of the city's equity in the benefits to be derived from country youth, it may well aid any plan which will equalize educational opportunities. The importance of this is emphasized when the tier analysis for various educational expenditures is extended through 1934. The more rural the area, the harder was public education hit.

Finally, implications following from the changing rural-urban relationships detailed in this chapter require the attention of the people who live in the country and those who live in the city. Traditionally farmers have had an antipathy to city dwellers. Some experiences of the depression period have seemed to modify this attitude and to give an increased realization of the interdependencies of agriculture and the business and industry of the city. On the other hand, issues have been raised regarding prices, wages, tariffs, and labor unions. There have been McNary-Haugen bills, export debenture plans, and the A.A.A. For the first time some villages have had an experience with organized labor. The employees of a small industrial plant in an eastern agricultural village were organized in 1934 by men sent out from union headquarters. A strike was called. In a middle-western farming community the state labor board ex-

exercised its authority in a dispute between the directors of a farmers' co-operative association and its employees. The political reverberations of this action are sure to be heard for many a year. Alignments of farmer and city wage-earners have been attempted, but they seem to fall apart rather easily. In New Zealand a labor party came to power by the votes of farmers, but there is ever the struggle to keep together in thought and attitude. It is very difficult for a farmer to understand a labor organizer's point of view, and it constantly tests the patience of a labor official to have a farmer stress the importance of land-ownership, low farm wages, and high prices for the food and fiber produced on the farm.

It is futile to think of turning back. The future lies, as Lewis Mumford says so well, in "intelligent participation and understanding at every stage in the process," and the "process" is sure to involve rather fundamental readjustments for both urban and rural society.¹

The foregoing discussion of the group organization of rural society extending all the way from families and neighborhoods to rural-urban relationships should give greater point to considerations of population which follow in the next chapters. The most important elements of groups and societies are the people themselves.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Draw or secure a general outline map of the United States indicating the location of cities of over 500,000 population in 1930. Indicate the percentage of growth or decline in each case since 1920.
2. Describe and give reasons for such direct contacts between rural and urban people, as shopping, visiting, recreation, which you think have increased most in the past five years.
3. Make a list of five city-centered agencies operating in country-village communities. Describe briefly the local system of organization and operation of each. Example: chain store, trade union.
4. Describe any variation which you have been able to observe in driving out twenty miles or more from a medium-sized city, in respect to density of country population, types of agriculture, frequency and size of villages, characteristics of the population.

¹ Mumford, Lewis, *Culture of Cities*. Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1939.

5. How do you account for this gradient pattern of rural-urban relations? What are its practical implications for land-use planning? For curriculum building in high schools?
6. Give the best example of which you know where farmers and city wage-earners are successfully working together, or give an example of a conflict situation and suggest ways out.

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PART II
RURAL SOCIETY: ITS PEOPLE AND
THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

CHAPTER VIII

ORIGINS AND DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL POPULATION

THE first part of this book discussed the structure and organization of rural society. It described family, neighborhood, village and community organization, and indicated interrelationships existing both within the rural structure and between rural and urban life.

It is necessary, however, before passing to a consideration of economic and social rural institutions, to study the rural people themselves, their origin, characteristics and distribution, and to relate all these things to their environment proper. Such a study is necessary because people constitute the element that gives the breath of life to the structure of society; it is from many social habits that the whole structure of society evolves.

ORIGINS OF RURAL POPULATION

The population of rural America is composed of many diverse strains. Almost every nation in the world has had a part in the development of our present rural society, some, of course, more than others. The contribution of a few of those races whose influence is still traceable and vital will be briefly examined.

The English. Two predominating English strains founded our first agricultural colonies, the country gentleman and the yeoman. The former settled in the South, the latter left his impress chiefly in New England. From the beginning, the South concentrated on export crops, first on tobacco, later on cotton. The history of the section is closely linked with the story of cotton and tobacco; in fact its very agricultural geography is determined by them. The South was not tilled so much by

small holders as it was divided into large estates or plantations, which were mostly self-subsisting. The plantation form of agriculture was a direct descendant of the old English manor. Since cotton and tobacco required cheap labor, a slave economy arose, accompanied by an enormous influx of Negroes for two hundred and fifty years after the country was first settled. Except for the political necessity of a county seat, the self-contained plantation had little if any need for the services of towns and villages, and this accounts for the fact that the number of Southern villages per one hundred square miles is today only half that in the Northern Colonial States.

The rise of isolation. The yeomen settled for the most part in New England, and to some extent in the Middle Atlantic States. They were freeholders, and participated in the great westward migration towards the cheap virgin land so different from that which their European forbears had tilled and exploited for centuries. The lure of these large holdings, the prospect of possessing land in such quantities as dwarfed their European experiences, seduced the imagination of these men, and in effect did away with the immemorial agricultural village in which their ancestors had resided, the village (still predominant in much of Europe and the Orient) from which they went forth to their fields in the morning, and to which they returned at night. In America, agriculture and isolation first united, and the result was the solitary homestead set in the midst of the farmer's acres, miles from the nearest town. Such was the pattern which came to characterize American agriculture.

It is hard now to realize how revolutionary the change was historically, and to appraise its influence in the development in the pioneer of such qualities as self-reliance, and rugged independence, qualities which contributed immensely, in the North and South alike, toward the drive for national liberty, and which account in part for the intense individualism that for decades characterized the economic, social and religious life of the United States. Nevertheless, as has been shown in Part I, the village could not be entirely dispensed with, and

today it has become the service station for the farming population.

In time the yeoman stream divided. Some, as we have seen, migrated to the west, and traces of their influence can be found now in many Middle and even Far Western States, for example, in such colleges as Grinnell, Earlham, and Whitman. Some, turning southwest in search of a kindlier climate than New England's, were marooned in the Appalachian Highlands and the Ozarks, along with many Southern *émigrés*. Even today, in the more isolated sections of these areas, one finds many household arts of pioneer days and hears English words which have passed out of currency everywhere else. Other New Englanders forsook agriculture for the sea and in their famous clipper ships carried the American flag and American trade over the seven seas, contributing, in this way, to the economic development of the young republic.

The Scotch and Irish. Another racial stream came from Ireland, driven out in the middle of the last century by successive crop failures and other economic maladjustment. The Irish settled from Maryland northward, for the most part in non-rural areas. The North-Irish and Scotch-Irish, who came earlier, established a considerable number of farming communities in Pennsylvania and northern Maryland, and their descendants are still living in scores of communities in those states, each settlement possessing its two-century-old Presbyterian church, and other relics of Irish and Scotch pioneering.

The Dutch. The Dutch, two of whose progeny have occupied the White House in this century, were rather more important in urban than in rural American development.

The Germans. The Germans, whose cultural contributions are very significant, came in two waves, the smaller from southern Germany in the eighteenth century, and the larger, from central and northern Germany in the century following.

The first are the so-called Pennsylvania Germans, sociologically a highly interesting race. Originally extremely poor and tenacious of their Germanic traditions, they remained for

nearly two centuries an almost alien group, not only in south-eastern Pennsylvania where they first settled, but wherever they chanced to migrate. Their form of religion they took with them when they migrated, and in their churches and parochial schools their dialect has been preserved in many places until this day. Moreover, they invariably cling to the limestone soil to which their ancestors were accustomed in the German Palatinate. These people fled to America partly because of untoward economic conditions, and partly to safeguard their religious liberty and avoid joining the German State Church.

The bulk of the North-German immigration, greatly stimulated by the German Revolution of 1848 and the conditions that produced and followed it, took place between 1836 and 1886. These people were agrarians, and settled for the most part in the West North Central States, as did a considerable stream which arrived about the same time from the Scandinavian peninsula. For a time the East regarded the rapid settlement of the frontier by people of alien tongues as highly dangerous, but this opposition began to fade when these immigrants responded wholeheartedly to the Northern spirit during the Civil War. They did, however, change the local scene. Places whose English names still betray their New England origin are engulfed by Germans and Scandinavians and their post-office rosters now reveal no English stock. The Congregational Church was replaced by the Reformed or Lutheran. The parochial school was introduced. The Verein became the leading social organization. Only the American forms of government and the physical structure of the community persisted.

The flood of immigrants, especially from southern and south-eastern Europe, increased enormously with the turn of the century, but for the most part these people settled in cities.

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Co-operation in Coopersburg* (New York, 1915), chapter II, for a more extensive discussion of this subject. See also the *Proceedings* of the Pennsylvania German Society. It would be quite possible and sociologically valuable to follow all population groups in greater detail, unfolding the influences which brought them to America, which moulded them, and the contributions they have made to American rural life.

The Czechs, who came earlier, did settle on the land, as did some of the Italians and Poles, especially in the East. These people, and the French Canadians who poured into Vermont and New Hampshire, and the Portuguese, who dominate some types of agriculture in eastern New England, introduced their diverse social elements. So, too, the Mexican has invaded the Southwest, though far more as an agricultural laborer than as a farmer.

The blending of these various racial streams with American rural life has been widespread and far-reaching in effect. In many communities, now apparently typically American, close study discloses influences, attitudes, and cultural deposits which reflect diverse racial local origins, without an understanding of which the community itself cannot be fully understood.

Obviously, all the members of these racial groups did not remain where they first settled. Most of them spread far and wide, mingling with new people, contributing and assimilating cultural and ethnological heritages. Today the actual number of foreign-born on farms and in villages of the United States is relatively small, and because of our present immigration laws, this number is declining, but the record of the achievements of immigrant farmers, as gathered from the United States Census tabulations and field studies, is highly significant.¹

THE SIZE AND LOCATION OF THE PRESENT RURAL POPULATION

But while rural America cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of the racial streams that contributed to it, it is more pertinent for our present purposes to consider the size, distribution and importance of the rural population in the nation.

Rural proportion declines. At the time of the federal census

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children*. Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1929. In areas where there are considerable numbers of foreign-born or sons of foreign-born the report of this nation-wide field and census study may well be used for further exploration as to the present status of the foreign-born on the land. The 1930 Census figures should however be secured and substituted for those of 1920 in chapters I and II.

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of 1820 the country was almost entirely rural, 93 per cent to be exact, but with each succeeding census the urban proportion increased, although the total number of rural people has never failed to gain.

By 1890 the United States had grown from the less than four million pioneers clinging to the Eastern seaboard in 1790 to a nation of over fifty millions, more than 70 per cent rural.¹ By the turn of the century our more than seventy-five millions were exactly 60 per cent rural and 40 per cent urban. Somewhere between 1910 and 1920 the urban population became the majority group, for the 1920 Census showed 51.4 per cent of the population living in urban territory. By 1930 this proportion had increased to 56.2 per cent.² Table 36 tells the story of the gain in rural and urban population during the half century prior to the 1930 census and of the changing proportion of these two groups in the national total.³

It will be observed that during the first decade of the century the rate of urban gain, 38.8 per cent, was four times the rural

TABLE 36. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES,
1880-1930 *
(Population in millions)

Year	Total	Rural	Urban	Rural Per cent	Urban Per cent
1880.....	50.16	35.80	14.36	71.4	28.6
1890.....	62.95	40.65	22.30	64.6	35.4
1900.....	75.99	45.61	30.38	60.0	40.0
1910.....	91.97	49.81	42.16	54.2	45.8
1920.....	105.71	51.41	54.30	48.6	51.4
1930.....	122.77	53.82	68.95	43.8	56.2

* *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, vol. 1, Population.*

¹ The definition of *rural* of the present United States Census of Population is used here. It includes the farm population, those living in incorporated centers of less than 2500 population and others living in rural territory but not engaged in farming.

² For the trend since 1930 see pp. 226-27.

³ It should be remembered that these census figures are based on an arbitrary dividing line between rural and urban. Some such line must, of course, be drawn. Because an agricultural village grows from 2450 to 2550 population in ten years, however, it does not cease to be a farmers' service station. Its people still live in rural surroundings. They have not changed their residence nor become urbanized because at one period their records were tabulated in the rural column and in the next in the urban. At one time the United States Census used 8000 as the dividing line between rural and urban. If it had continued to do so 49.1 per cent of the population would have been classed as rural in 1930. The 1930 United States Census of Retail Distribution classed together rural and small town communities, including all centers of less than 10,000 inhabitants in the latter category, or 52.4 per cent of the total population of the nation.

increase of 9.2 per cent. Between 1910 and 1920 urban population grew nine times as fast as rural, 28.8 per cent as against 3.2 per cent. Between 1920 and 1930 the rates of gain were respectively about 28 and 5 per cent.

Numerically the rural population up to 1930 was clearly of declining importance. But even so, it represents a very appreciable part of the nation. It includes, for one thing, more than half of all the children under sixteen years of age. Twenty-seven of the forty-eight states were more rural than urban in 1930 and will almost certainly be so in 1940. Eight others are more rural than the nation as a whole. The details are given in Table 37. The urban population is obviously

TABLE 37. PROPORTION OF RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY STATES,
1920 AND 1930

State	1920		1930	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
North Dakota.	86.4	13.6	83.4	16.6
Mississippi.	86.6	13.4	83.1	16.9
South Dakota.	84.0	16.0	81.1	18.9
Arkansas.	83.4	16.6	79.4	20.6
South Carolina.	82.5	17.5	78.7	21.3
New Mexico.	82.0	18.0	74.8	25.2
North Carolina.	80.8	19.2	74.5	25.5
Alabama.	78.3	21.7	71.9	28.1
West Virginia.	74.8	25.2	71.6	28.4
Idaho.	72.4	27.6	70.9	29.1
Kentucky.	73.8	26.2	69.4	30.6
Georgia.	74.9	25.1	69.2	30.8
Wyoming.	70.5	29.5	68.9	31.1
Virginia.	70.8	29.2	67.6	32.4
Vermont.	68.8	31.2	67.0	33.0
Montana.	68.7	31.3	66.3	33.7
Tennessee.	73.9	26.1	65.7	34.3
Oklahoma.	73.4	26.6	65.7	34.3
Arizona.	64.8	35.2	65.6	34.4
Nebraska.	68.7	31.3	64.7	35.3
Nevada.	80.3	19.7	62.2	37.8
Kansas.	65.1	34.9	61.2	38.8
Iowa.	63.6	36.4	60.4	39.6
Louisiana.	65.1	34.9	60.3	39.7
Maine.	61.0	39.0	59.7	40.3
Texas.	67.6	32.4	59.0	41.0
Minnesota.	55.9	44.1	51.0	49.0
Colorado.	51.8	48.2	49.8	50.2
Missouri.	53.4	46.6	48.8	51.2
Oregon.	50.1	49.9	48.7	51.3
Delaware.	45.8	54.2	48.3	51.7
Florida.	63.3	36.7	48.3	51.7
Utah.	52.0	48.0	47.6	52.4
Wisconsin.	52.7	47.3	47.1	52.9
Indiana.	49.4	50.6	44.5	55.5
Washington.	44.8	55.2	43.4	56.6
New Hampshire.	36.9	63.1	41.3	58.7
Maryland.	40.0	60.0	40.2	59.8
Pennsylvania.	35.7	64.3	32.2	67.8
Ohio.	36.2	63.8	32.2	67.8
Michigan.	38.9	61.1	31.8	68.2
Connecticut.	32.2	67.8	29.6	70.4
California.	32.0	68.0	26.7	73.3
Illinois.	32.1	67.9	26.1	73.9
New Jersey.	21.6	78.4	17.4	82.6
New York.	17.3	82.7	16.4	83.6
Massachusetts.	5.2	94.8	9.8	90.2
Rhode Island.	2.5	97.5	7.6	92.4

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, vol. I, Population.*

concentrated in a minority of the states, so that in the majority, educators, clergymen, social workers and governmental officers will have to deal with predominately rural groups. Even so highly an industrialized state as Pennsylvania has nearly 1,000,000 farm population and a total rural population of over 3,000,000.

The causes which transformed the United States from an almost completely rural nation to one more than half urban will be discussed more fully in the next chapter. Briefly the outstanding explanation lies in the rapid growth of industrialism. This phenomenon operated also, of course, elsewhere in the world. For example, the farming population of England declined from about one third the total in 1810 to about one tenth in 1860, the period which embraces the first industrial revolution. More recently Japan has repeated the experience, as the following table shows:

TABLE 38. DISTRIBUTION OF THE RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION IN JAPAN, 1898 TO 1925

Year	Rural Population		Urban Population		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1898	30,401,513	67.44	14,011,528	32.56	45,503,041	100.0
1903	29,003,660	61.60	18,639,076	38.40	48,542,736	100.0
1908	28,107,790	54.32	23,634,813	45.68	51,742,522	100.0
1913	27,802,064	50.44	27,339,206	49.56	55,141,270	100.0
1918	27,070,684	46.60	31,016,503	53.40	58,087,277	100.0
1920	27,105,756	48.43	28,857,208	51.57	55,963,964	100.0
1925	26,413,316	44.21	32,323,506	55.79	59,736,822	100.0

Source: Edmund de S. Brunner, "Rural Problems in Japan," *Social Forces*, vol. XI, no. 1. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, October, 1932.

The density of rural population. One highly important characteristic of rural areas is, of course, a relatively low population density. For the nation as a whole 41.3 persons live on the average square mile, but in New York City the figure is 23,178.7 and in Chicago 17,512.6. Even the density of rural population varies widely, a variation which may be ascribed to many factors, such as crops, topography, climate, proximity to large cities, and length of settlement in the area. For example, in Salem County, New Jersey, a fruit and trucking region, population density is 107.4 persons per square mile, but in Hunterdon County in the same state, which is devoted

to dairying and general farming, the figure is 79.5. Walworth County, Wisconsin, a dairying district, registered a density of 55.5 persons in 1930. A representative section in the corn belt, Pocahontas County, Iowa, had a density of 27.2. Wheat, a crop more highly mechanized than corn, brings a lower population density, since individual farms are larger. For example, Stutsman County, North Dakota, in 1930 had a density of 11.4. In areas of sparse rainfall where dry farming is practiced, farms become larger, thus reducing the density, as in McKenzie County in western North Dakota, where the figure is 3.4. Mountainous areas are not generally favorable for farming, and are likely to be devoted to stock raising or forestry, which accounts for the low point in population density in Beaverhead County, Montana, where there are only 1.2 persons to the square mile. A relatively new state like Wyoming, which is both mountainous and deficient in rainfall, has only two cities of over 10,000, and is an important stock raising area, showed a population density of only 2.3 in 1930.

Importance of density. The low density of population in rural areas as compared with urban and suburban centers is one of the major difficulties that must be overcome in the social organization of rural America. Des Moines, Iowa, has a population of nearly 150,000 persons living in an area of 54 square miles, a density of over 2700 persons per square mile. This city possesses several dozen school houses, a paid fire department with fire stations strategically located over the city, a fine library with several branches, a paid police force, and an efficient health department as well as other social utilities, such as hospitals, clinics, street lighting, and water mains.

A township of similar area in a nearby rural county with a population density of 25 to 30 persons on each of its 36 square miles has no fire or police protection, probably no library, or at best only a small one, and a part time health officer whose duties are confined to tacking up quarantine signs and making routine reports. Street lighting and water mains are absent. Such a township has a few one or two room schools, or if it has a consolidated school, an appreciable part of its budget is

spent in transporting the pupils to and from their homes.

Obviously no such rural township needs social utilities in the same amount and degree as a city like Des Moines, but just as obviously it has need for educational facilities, fire and police protection and health and social services. The absence of these used to be taken as one of the handicaps of rural living, but more and more ruralites are seeking and even demanding service along these lines. It is often difficult for the township or even the county to supply these, and for this reason rural people are beginning to demand state support for certain minimum institutional services.

REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS IN RURAL AMERICA

Comparisons in this chapter and in Part I have contrasted various sections of the United States. These distinctions are very important for our discussion. As will be shown again and again, conditions in many regions vary sharply from national averages and from one another. It is necessary, therefore, to study the social influences of regional peculiarities, and this study in turn involves an understanding of the regions themselves.

Census divisions. The best-known national classification is that of the United States Census which divides the country into nine sections, as follows:

New England — Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

Middle Atlantic — New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey.

East North Central — Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin.

West North Central — Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas.

South Atlantic — Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida.

East South Central — Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi.

West South Central — Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas.
Mountain — Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada.

Pacific — California, Oregon, Washington.

Crop areas. Another official division is that of the United States Department of Agriculture, made on the basis of crop areas.¹ The effect of these crop areas on social conditions may be illustrated by reference to two factors, the community area, and the open country population of the community, both discussed in Chapter V. Small groups of villages, where the factors of topography and proximity to cities did not appear, were selected from the corn, wheat and fruit belts, encompassing Iowa, North Dakota, and California respectively. The average extent of the community area in square miles was computed for each of these three groups and compared with open-country population and density, with the results shown in Table 39.

TABLE 39. AVERAGE AREA OF COMMUNITIES AND AVERAGE COUNTRY POPULATION

Crop Area	Number of Villages *	Average Area of Community (Square Miles)	Average Country Population	Persons Per Square Mile
Corn.....	10	80.0	1640	20.5
Wheat.....	9	294.4	1908	6.5
Citrus.....	6	40.0	1443	31.1

* The communities selected for this table were as nearly as possible one-crop communities.

It will be observed that the area of a community in the wheat belt is seven times greater than in a fruit-growing district, but that the density of population in the latter is five times that of the former. As far as the factors of transportation or topography are concerned, there is no reason why the California communities should not be larger. The average number

¹ This plan of classification divided the country into two parts: the eastern half with a sufficient amount of rainfall for agricultural production by ordinary methods, and the western half with less adequate rainfall except in certain districts. Each of these halves is subdivided into six areas. Those in the East are classified according to temperature and crops grown: (1) hay and pasture, (2) corn, (3) corn and winter wheat, (4) cotton, (5) sub-tropical gulf coast region, (6) spring wheat. In the West, where rainfall and topography determine the nature and amount of agricultural production, the areas derive their names from their physical features: (1) Great Plains, (2) Rocky Mountain, (3) Arid Intermountain Plateaus, (4) North Pacific, (5) South Pacific, (6) California-Arizona desert region.

For a detailed analysis of the agricultural production of each area in 1920, see "A Geographic Summary of American Agriculture," by O. E. Baker, in the *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture*, 1921, 407-507.

of farmers served does not vary greatly, regardless of the size of the village. This is largely because other centers spring up, each serving its own closely integrated group of farmers.¹

The type of regional classification used depends upon the purposes of a given discussion. In this work we are concerned with population regionalism and with certain sociological data varying significantly with population. For this reason the Federal Census divisions are frequently used, or, as in many studies of the above-mentioned Institute, regions or census divisions have been combined into the following units: New England, Middle Atlantic, South, Middle West, and Far West. In this classification the South includes the three Southern Census divisions or regions; the Middle West, the two Central Western regions, and the Far West and Mountain and Pacific.² Some of the chief regional characteristics and their significance will now be described.

New England and Middle Atlantic regions. The New England and Middle Atlantic regions, rurally, bear unmistakable marks of their peculiar situation. More than any other regions, they carry on the colonial tradition. This is manifested even in their domestic and ecclesiastical architecture. Their agriculture is conditioned by proximity to urban markets, but urban opportunity has drained off more of their youth than elsewhere, so that their farmers are on the average older. But although the number of their farms may continue to decrease in any predictable future, agriculture, and therefore rural life in these regions, have achieved during the last decade or two, a relative balance with industry and the city, or at least more of a balance than other regions.

The Middle West. The Middle West, on the other hand,

¹ Still another classification, adopted by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, sought to reveal certain differences which the other two classifications seemed to obscure. Its classification differs from that of the census chiefly because it sets aside the Southern mountains as a separate region totally unlike the rest of the South. This dividing line is drawn to allow also for certain situations where characteristics of one state or census division dominate bordering counties of another.

² For a detailed discussion of these regions and their economic and social characteristics in 1920, with maps, see Morse and Brunner, *The Town and Country Church in the United States*, pp. 17-36. New York, 1923.

was invaded by various migratory streams, and therefore, by various cultures. As already described, its relative lack of cities and large farms forced it into cereal farming, and thus made it more dependent upon world economic conditions than any other region except the South. Fluctuations in these conditions have been responsible for prosperity, a land boom, and finally, depression with foreclosures, tax sales, and increasing tenancy, all of which have brought a cessation of social progress, as will be shown later.

The Far West. The Far West was settled last. It profited by the accumulated experience of the territories whence its population came. Its pioneering stage was brief. Aided by splendid mineral and agricultural resources, and a well-advertised climate, it eagerly appropriated the best experience of the nation. Co-operation flourished. Public schools were excellent. The level of rural social life remained high between 1920 and 1930, but progressed little, if at all, after that.

The South. The South, with its high proportion of Negroes, its absence of foreign-born, and its cotton and tobacco culture conducted by an increasing number of tenants, evolved an economy peculiar to itself: large plantations, comparatively few villages, and the socially and economically important county seat. All these things have also produced a relatively lower standard of community life, especially among the Negroes and in the Southern highlands. But in the decade from 1920 to 1930, the South has made much progress, in some respects more than other regions. It has, for instance, created county health units, in which it leads the nation.

Yet in one village in the far South, where climate and irrigation made possible the growth of such Southern California crops as citrus fruit, melons, and early spring vegetables, for winter sale in the North, cotton-growing had disappeared by 1924. The population was drawn from many regions, farms were small, churches variegated, and even architecture and speech were affected by the new industry. Field workers described it as a California village set down in the Far South. Southern *mores* were on the defensive. Southern traditions

were not binding on the community. The Mexican, rather than the Negro, furnished the farm labor. In population growth, school construction, farm ownership and per capita retail sales, this community in the decade prior to the last survey ranked first or second among thirty agricultural villages studied in the South. Even regional influences, powerful as they are, exercise no unimpregnable control, as this illustration shows. Regional boundaries themselves may not be fixed for all time.

There has been a great increase in the use of regional classifications in the last decade. Various departments and agencies of the Federal Government use no less than 110 different regional classifications, many of which vary but slightly. The regions of the Federal Reserve banks and of the Farm Credit Administration are illustrations. Many corporations also have regional divisions. Social agencies like the American Red Cross have regional offices. The excellent studies of the National Resources Committee make much of regional planning and have stimulated the interest in regional matters. These studies indicate that many conditions and problems overlap state lines, that they affect and are the concern of regional groupings of states and that necessary action therefore must also transcend state lines. Some political scientists have even proposed that the number of states be reduced from 48 to 6 or 12. Unquestionably the trend is for an increasing use to be made of regional divisions for planning and administration and by the same token the subject of regionalism will become increasingly important.

This chapter has described briefly some of the racial streams, now largely assimilated, which have contributed to American rural life. It has shown that despite the fact that rural people were becoming up to 1930 more and more a minority in the nation, they are still, nevertheless, a very important element in the population, and do indeed dominate, numerically, a majority of the states. The importance of low density of population, a characteristic of ruralism, has been pointed out, as well as the relation of geographic and economic factors to

population and to social institutions. But two important questions have not been answered: What has brought about the present distribution of our rural population? Why has urban population forged ahead of rural? A third topic injects itself here also: What has been the trend regarding population since the completion of the 1930 Census, and what of the future? These questions will be answered in the next chapter.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Trace the early settlements in your county. Where did the first settlers come from? What racial groups did they include?
2. Examine the 1930 Census returns for the total population of your county and describe (*United States Census of Population*, vol. III, 1930, State Tables) the racial influences that are present in it.
3. Make a list of the states and census regions which have gained and one of those which have lost rural population since 1920. Do the same for urban population. (*United States Census of Population*, vol. III, 1930.)
4. Is the decline in the proportion of rural people in the total population good or bad from the point of view of national welfare? Defend your point of view.
5. What, if any, are the evidences that the interests of the rural population as a minority group may be overlooked in national policy-making?
6. Should matters of regional concern be handled by regional organizations or by co-operation among the states? Defend your point of view in terms of your own general region.

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CHAPTER IX

THE MOBILITY OF RURAL POPULATION

MIGRATION from Europe to the rural areas of America, which began almost as soon as the first colonies were permanently established, and which continued to the close of the last century, is by no means the only migrational influence in rural America. Once the nation was firmly established, the ceaseless movement of people hither and thither across the continent was of even greater importance.

AMERICA'S GREAT MIGRATIONS

Before 1930, this movement was characterized by two drifts, one westward, the other toward the cities. The former came first, and was the more important for many decades. The latter movement began slowly, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but in the fifty or sixty years prior to 1930 it gradually became more significant than the westward trek.

Westward ho! Westward expansion began in colonial times. The English who settled Plymouth, Cape Cod, and Boston, penetrated to the Berkshires in a few decades, to central New York by 1800, and thence continued to move westward. So with other groups. The indentured servants of the early Virginia planters, after serving their time, pushed up the Virginia rivers toward the west. In Washington's day, the site of Pittsburgh was the western outpost of the European *émigré*. Expansion accelerated with time, led by frontiersmen of the Daniel Boone type, in whose wake followed hardy pioneer farmers like the parents of Abraham Lincoln. So it continued until the comparatively recent days of homesteading, the frontier and the center of population moving farther west every year,

The frontier. The frontier left a tremendous mark on American life, rural and urban. Pioneering involved ceaseless, unaided struggle. Land had to be cleared and cultivated; civilization with its well established and comfortable institutions was left behind. Neighbors were few and far between. Only the strong, the fittest, survived. Migration meant a definite break with Europe, the parent continent, and a repudiation of the eastern United States, whence the pioneers had come.¹

In the main, the frontier drive was economic. Cheap Western land, the chance to become monarchs of vast acres lured the masses. Land was wealth in those days, as in all agrarian civilizations, and these migrants were Europeans, or the descendants of Europeans, and accustomed to the meager holdings of continental peasantry. They were willing to make any sacrifice to obtain and hold these vast acres of the West.² A movement similar to ours is that from China proper and Korea into Manchuria, which has brought a fifteen-fold increase in the population of this fertile empire since 1900, an empire now inhabited by thirty million people.

Westward expansion carried 3,500,000 people into the eastern Middle West, including Iowa and Minnesota, between 1850 and 1860. The importance of this enormous mass migration, as indeed of all interstate migrations, is recognized by the United States Census, which, for the last seven enumerations, has attempted a rough measure of the migrational force by noting how many people are living in states where they were not born. For example, by 1870, one twelfth of all persons born east of the Mississippi were residing west of it, that is, two fifths of the West's six million population. Horace Greeley's slogan, "Go West, young man!" described a national movement.

¹ The influence of the frontier has been well discussed by the historian Turner. See also Eggleston's *Hoosier Schoolmaster* and James T. Adams's *Epic of America*, chaps. iv, v, vi. Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1932.

² See Herbert Quick, *Vandermark's Folly* (Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1923), for an excellent description in fictional form of the American migration and its motives. See also sections of Phillips's *Life and Labor in the Old South* (Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1931) for family case histories based on old records and materials relating to the causes of migration and the experience of migrants from the Old South.

The period ends. In 1890, one tenth of those born east of the Mississippi, about four and a half million, had crossed it, and almost another million was added by 1910. Thereafter the pace slackened, both because free land was getting scarce, and because of the rise of the "industrial frontier" in the East. The 5.2 million Easterners reported living in the West in the 1930 Census constituted but a sixth of all Western population, and less than one thirteenth of all living Easterners. Indeed, the movement reversed itself, and the flow was toward the east: by 1930, 1.65 million Westerners were living east of the Mississippi, 600,000 more than in 1920, and a million more than in 1910. From 1870 to 1930, however, the trans-Mississippi population increased from 5.75 to 33.8 million people.¹

Migrations are more than movements of people. Along with the baggage stowed in the prairie schooner were transplanted distinctive social and cultural ideas: ideas of local government, of community organization, education, architecture, even modes of speech and superstitions. The farther west the pioneers traveled and the more they mingled with natives of other regions and countries, the more their traditional personal and social mores were modified by environmental and social contacts.²

Pioneer influences. It is not difficult, now, when westward expansion has altogether ceased and the nation has become comparatively stabilized, to detect some of the more abiding results of migration. Most important of all, the pioneer engrafted on American culture the idea of "rugged individualism" by which alone the pioneer survived and which has only recently, and perhaps temporarily, been more or less abandoned.

¹ Similarly, the movement from the South to the North was two to three times as strong as the movement from North to South. This includes Negro migration from the South. (The North constitutes New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and West North Central Census divisions. The South embraces South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central divisions.) Each census since 1910 has found just over three per cent of all those northern-born residing in the South—double the figure of 1870. On the other hand, Southerners in the North equaled 5.3 per cent of all Southern-born in 1900, and 8.6 per cent in 1930.

² Cf. Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends* (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1933), for further discussion of this topic. The above paragraph is quoted from chapter 1 of that work.

Furthermore, the pioneer had his share in our continuing "splendid isolation" from the rest of the world, in the face of rather intricate economic and cultural ties with all lands. The westward movement gave us our great dramatic era of railroad building, the by-product of which was the creation and growth of towns and villages. The rapidity of agricultural and transportation development increased the value of land and helped create a speculative attitude toward it. The necessity of having governmental units of manageable areas resulted in our three thousand local counties, our tens of thousands of townships, and our hundreds of thousands of school districts. These divisions are less necessary now than in the last century, since today the fast-moving automobile has replaced the horse and a plane can span the continent in twelve hours. Frequently, therefore, throughout this volume, problems and conditions will be discussed which have their roots in an age that is past, outmoded by the rush of inventions, but persisting as part of a tradition or because social inventiveness lags behind mechanical discovery.

TABLE 40. NATIVE POPULATION BORN IN OTHER CENSUS DIVISIONS,
LIVING IN SPECIFIED DIVISION

Residence in Census Division	Born in Other Divisions						
	1870 Per cent	1880 Per cent	1890 Per cent	1900 Per cent	1910 Per cent	1920 Per cent	1930 Per cent
New England.....	4.0	5.0	5.9	7.5	7.7	8.2	7.8
Middle Atlantic.....	5.0	4.9	4.9	6.0	6.6	7.3	9.5
East North Central.....	23.8	17.9	13.7	12.2	11.3	13.0	15.8
West North Central.....	48.9	42.9	35.8	27.7	23.6	19.9	16.6
South Atlantic.....	3.1	3.4	3.5	4.1	4.9	6.7	7.6
East South Central.....	14.9	11.2	9.0	8.1	7.4	7.0	7.5
West South Central.....	37.1	31.9	27.7	25.9	24.4	21.1	17.1
Mountain.....	34.5	45.6	50.9	44.8	49.0	46.4	40.6
Pacific.....	50.6	44.0	48.7	44.6	53.0	51.1	52.5

Source: *State of Birth of the Native Population, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, p. 11.

Fascinating as it might be to trace further the ebb and flow of population currents, the data becomes too complicated for treatment in this text. Tables 40 and 41, drawn from the Census, summarize the situation, and show to what extent the

agrarian West attracted natives of other areas, especially, in earlier decades, from the Middle Atlantic and New England states. These tables record the period when the westward movement reversed itself, and prove that the South did not attract American-born migrants as the West did.

TABLE 41. NET GAIN OR LOSS THROUGH INTERDIVISIONAL MIGRATION OF NATIVE POPULATION, BY DIVISION
(In thousands)

Census Division	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
New England...	- 454.3	- 426.5	- 357.1	- 218.8	- 205.1	- 170.9	- 307.0
Middle Atlantic...	- 1251.3	- 1367.8	- 1337.0	- 1008.2	- 932.5	- 805.3	- 255.6
East North Central...	+ 842.0	+ 110.8	- 706.2	- 855.4	- 1376.4	- 898.2	+ 69.7
West North Central...	+ 1381.6	+ 1880.2	+ 2016.4	+ 1328.6	+ 512.3	- 210.8	- 1236.4
South Atlantic...	- 1142.7	- 1086.8	- 901.2	- 950.6	- 901.2	- 749.2	- 1088.8
East South Central...	- 202.7	- 530.0	- 686.6	- 880.6	- 1176.9	- 1565.4	- 1915.4
West South Central...	+ 630.7	+ 897.4	+ 1037.7	+ 1389.4	+ 1634.6	+ 1385.0	+ 808.9
Mountain...	+ 72.6	+ 206.6	+ 413.4	+ 525.6	+ 869.3	+ 965.0	+ 677.6
Pacific...	+ 214.1	+ 316.1	+ 610.7	+ 749.9	+ 1575.9	+ 2047.9	+ 3246.9

Source: *State of Birth of the Native Population, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, p. 11.

Urban-rural differences. The data presented above concern the total population. Figures relating to rural population are not easily obtainable. The Census of 1920, for the first time, proved that the city has a far larger proportion of interstate migrants than the country. (Such data were not recorded in the 1930 Census.) Twenty-eight per cent of all city dwellers were born in states other than those in which they resided; the comparable rural figure was only 18.5.

The 1930 Census also contributes some information on this point in its analysis of urban, rural-farm and rural non-farm population statistics.¹

This voluminous data which must be studied by those who desire to understand the population composition of their own states, raises vital questions for the social scientist. It reveals, for instance, that more Illinoisans than natives of any other state have taken up farming outside their native state. Illinois' net loss through such agrarian mobility is 50 per cent larger than Iowa's, the next highest loser. Again, it reveals that the farm population of all Mountain and Pacific States

¹ See *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, vol. 1. *Population*. State of birth of native population, especially pages 56, 61, and 65.

gained through these interstate movements; Oklahoma's net increase is twice California's, the second on the list of gainers. Each division, except, naturally, the Pacific, made its greatest contribution to the farm population of the division immediately adjacent to the West. Pacific migrants moved in greatest numbers to the Mountain States lying just to the east. With two or three exceptions, these trends are true also for the rural non-farm population. In sum, for the nation as a whole, one fourth of the population are living in states other than those in which they were born.

RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION

Data already discussed in this chapter mentioned the second great population current, that from country to city. The Census has never published figures showing the number of city residents born in rural areas, farm or non-farm. But up to 1930 rural-urban migration was too well recognized to need proof. Though never measured scientifically in all its aspects, it has been described again and again in fiction and in such works of art as the picture, "The Breaking of Home Ties."

Leaving the farm. Lately the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture attempted to estimate the drift of people from farm to city and from city to farm. These estimates give only the statistical story since 1920, but the movement began in the 1870's, particularly in New England, and became a national phenomenon by 1910.¹ In the main report on *Recent Social Trends*, Mr. O. E. Baker calculates that the net migration from country to city between 1920 and 1930 was 5,898,000; 60 per cent of these wanderers came from the South, and one third were Negroes.²

¹ Cf. O. E. Baker, "Utilization of Natural Wealth," *Recent Social Trends in the United States*, chap. II, Part I, pp. 110-11. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933.

² O. E. Baker, *op. cit.* The migration is estimated by comparing the number of persons in each five-year age group of the rural non-farm population in 1930, with the number in each age group ten years younger in 1920, who would naturally be expected to survive in 1930, using expectation of life figures evolved by comparing the 1920 and 1930 figures for native whites in such age groups in the country as a whole and Negroes as a whole with the Negro population of the Southern States. Migration of children born on farms during the decade is not included.

Types of migrants. Table 42 shows that the movement fluctuated, that it began to recede in 1926, and that throughout the whole period there was always, as is usual in any population drift, even in the Manchurian influx alluded to above, a counter current of varying but always smaller strength. Numerous studies indicate that rural-urban migrants included young adults, older but still vigorous people searching for greater economic opportunity, the upper middle-aged, frequently retired, desiring an easier life, and finally, people who could no longer endure agricultural toil. In short, the country contributed to the city a steady supply of youth, and many who took with them the savings of years of farming; this loss of money as well as of people proved, of course, a serious economic loss to some communities.

TABLE 42. ESTIMATED POPULATION MOVEMENT TO AND FROM FARMS
(In thousands)

During Year	To Cities * from Farms	To Farms from Cities *	Net Movement to	
			Cities	Farms
1920-24.....	8,701	5,370	3,331	
1925-29.....	10,735	7,770	2,965	
1930.....	1,823	1,611	212	
1931.....	1,566	1,546	20	
1932.....	1,511	1,777		266
1933.....	1,225	944	281	
1934.....	1,051	700	351	
1935.....	1,211	825	386	
1936.....	1,166	719	447	
1937.....	1,160	872	288	
1938.....	1,025	823	202	

* "Cities" here includes towns and villages. The net loss by migration from farms is therefore greater than the loss to the total rural population as it includes migrants from the farm joining both the urban and rural non-farm groups.

Source: *Farm Population Estimates*, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

In the city trek, the ages between 18 and 30 predominated. Females, the children of tenants, and younger sons of landlords, were most likely to leave home. Four fifths or more of all migrants settled within a hundred miles of home, a majority of these within fifty miles. Those who went to the city were most likely either to enter the professions or to remain at the

bottom of the scale as unskilled laborers. In short, the best and the poorest of farm youth apparently wandered to the city.¹

The county story. As a result of migration, 1086 of our 3065 counties lost population between 1910 and 1920, but 34 per cent of these counties had only 17 per cent of the national population. Between 1920 and 1930, 1265 of the 3079 declined in population, or 41 per cent of all counties, containing about one fourth the national population. Three fifths of these losing counties were in one fourth of the states.² From one million square miles of our territory the inhabitants flocked to the other two million.

Reasons for migration. Why did these people leave the country? Their own answers show that high taxes and small profits drove many away, while others craved richer educational, social, and cultural opportunities. But the social scientist probes beneath these replies. His answers are that, first of all, land lost its importance as a means of livelihood, that more alluring and profitable means of subsistence were found in the cities. In 1820, agriculture, the leading American occupation, absorbed two thirds of those gainfully employed; in 1930, barely one fourth. In the interval of one hundred and ten years

¹ These statements are based on the following studies comprehending about 5,000 farm families:

Cf. Anderson and Loomis, *Migration of Sons and Daughters of White Farmers in Wake County*. North Carolina State College, Raleigh, 1930.

Smick and Yoder, *A Study of Farm Migration in Selected Communities in the State of Washington*. Washington State College of Agriculture, Pullman, 1929.

Lively and Beck, *Movement of Open Country Population in Ohio* (Ohio State College of Agriculture, Columbus, 1930, and *Movement of Open Country Population in Three Townships in Northeastern Ohio* (mimeographed 1928; the same); Young, *The Movement of Farm Population* (College of Agriculture, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 1924).

Zimmerman, "Migration to Towns and Cities," various articles based on Minnesota studies in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Chicago, Illinois; *Farm Economics*, Palo Alto, California; and *Social Forces*, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1926-30.

See also Gee and Corson, *Rural Depopulation in Certain Tidewater and Piedmont Areas of Virginia* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia, Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, 1929), and Perkins, "Selective Migration from Three Rural Vermont Towns and Its Significance," *Fifth Annual Report of the Eugenics Survey of Vermont* (Burlington, University of Vermont, 1931).

² These states were Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

manufacturing and trade surpassed agriculture in national importance; but of this more elsewhere.

Moreover, mechanization decreased the need of man-power on the farm, and helped to increase the efficiency of those who remained. Indeed, many tasks, such as butter and soap making, and butchering, were transferred from farmhouse to commercial institutions, often located in town or city. Many such impersonal factors influenced migration. Depletion of soil fertility through erosion and in other ways, discussed in Chapter XIV, played its part also. As opportunity on the land waned, it waxed in the city.

Underlying all these phenomena, however, was the natural increase of farm population; as the next chapter will show, ruralites are more fertile than urbanites. The country supplied not only the surplus food for national consumption, but the excess population for the replenishment of cities. Overpopulation in the country made a cityward trek imperative, and for this reason rural America was called "the seed bed of the nation."

Results of the rural-urban migration. The great movement to the city had far-reaching results in both city and country. Those who left their rural homes, quite naturally, took their mental furniture with them, and the influence of the frontier lingered in their blood. Although the city liberalized them, provincialism was not entirely eradicated. Consider, for example, their churches which remained, according to many studies by H. Paul Douglass (already mentioned in Chapter VII), nothing but oversized country institutions. Our city school term, to take another instance, is that of the farmer, the vacations coinciding with the time when the farmer's children are most needed in the fields. Our taxation system, too, is still largely of agrarian origin. If, then, there has been urbanization of the country, there has been also ruralization of the city, and that to such an extent that some authorities believe that the rural heritage is a fundamental determinant of our national psychology.¹

¹ Cf. especially, J. M. Williams, *Our Rural Heritage*, Knopf, New York, 1925.

We are most concerned, however, with some of the rural results of this migration, which were in some cases unfortunate, but more often beneficial if we look at the picture as a whole.

The city profits. The migration obviously contributed to the economic and social wealth of the city, both directly and indirectly. Its youth — most of the migrants were between 15 and 25 — was a splendid addition to the man-power of the city. From one twelfth to one tenth were between 25 and 35. The city thus obtained a horde of people whom it did not have to educate, for they were already educated in their places of origin. Another third of the migrants were under fifteen, but a majority of these had had some schooling. The cities probably bore less than half the cost of educating, providing medical service, and feeding and clothing the young men and women who went to work in their commerce and industries between 1920 and 1930. O. E. Baker estimated that in the 1920's the rural contribution to the city from the three causes amounted to \$1,400,000,000 a year.¹ He also estimated that between \$300,000,000 and \$400,000,000 left the country for the city in the settlement of estates.² These sums are equivalent to about 20 per cent of the annual net farm income, and therefore lend cogency to the argument for the equalization of educational opportunity and costs by means of state or possibly federal subsidies. This matter is discussed further in Chapter XVII.

The influx of so many people stimulated urban building trades and raised land values. If, however, the six million migrants had remained in the country, and thereby added that many people to rural population and to agricultural laborers, artisans and shopkeepers, standards of living would perforce have decreased and farms become smaller.³ From

¹ Baker, "Rural-Urban Migration and the National Welfare." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, June, 1933.

² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³ Of course, if industry had decentralized (see Chapter VI), and these persons performed in the rural areas substantially the same work they did in the cities, the reverse would be true.

this aspect, the migration was beneficial to the nation as well as to the city. At present urban opportunity is largely closed to rural youth, and the problems of those from 18 to 25 years old in the country have become matters of urgent concern to the agricultural extension service, to educators and to others interested in youth.

THE URBAN-RURAL MIGRATION

First stages. But the city did not hold all it received. Many were dissatisfied there and returned to the country. Dr. Galpin of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, in 1929, asked 10,000 of those who returned to the land their reasons for returning. Sixteen per cent said they could save more money on the farm; 14 per cent felt that city work was too uncertain and hard; 10 per cent preferred the independence of farm life, and 27 per cent believed that the city was not a fit place in which to rear children, and returned to the farm for the sake of health and better all-around living conditions. Nearly half, therefore, departed because they disliked the urban environment. Seventy-seven per cent of the families had previously farmed. Husband or wife, or both, of ten per cent had been born on farms; the remaining thirteen per cent had only urban experience.

Depression period. Moreover, as Table 42 showed, the economic depression decisively checked the cityward trek. Even before the depression began, an inverse ratio between the index of business activity and cityward movement had been noticed.¹ Since 1929, for better or worse, some ten million people have forsaken the crowded insecurity of cities for the relative security of the country. Farm population has by now passed the former all-time peak of the 1910 Census. On January 1, 1938, it was estimated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics as 31,819,000.

Much of the gain in the population of the United States since

¹ Cf. Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, pp. 10-13. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1933.

1930 has been rural. The cities are approaching a static population, a few even declined between 1920 and 1930. Urban elementary school enrollment has been declining slowly for a decade. In the last eight years, New York City's elementary and junior high school enrollment has declined more than 5 per cent. It is probable that the 1940 census will show no decline in the rural proportion of the nation's population and possibly a small increase.

The increase in the number of farms between 1930 and 1935, noted in Chapter XIV, is one evidence of this. Similarly the apparent increase in the population of the 140 village-centered communities between 1930 and 1936 points in the same direction.¹ The available data indicate that the bulk of the new population came from near-by cities, surrounding country and other regions. Roughly speaking the first source largely characterized communities east of the Mississippi River. The second source was more largely reported from the South and Middle West, where it was a result of the mechanization of agriculture and the loss of farms because of the depression. The Far West alone reported, in this case for both village and open country, the arrival of persons from other regions. Most of these persons were fleeing from the Dust Bowl and other drought areas.

The new farm population showed some inter-state and regional migration in all regions but especially the two western ones. This was the dominant source of new farm population in 3 communities out of 7 of the half that reported a significant amount of new population. Two out of seven, fairly evenly distributed except in the Far West, received new farmers from near-by urban centers.

All told, the 1935 census of agriculture showed two million persons living on farms who had not resided on farms before 1930. Many of these settled on part-time or subsistence farms near industrial or mining areas. Disproportionate numbers also moved to regions of poorer lands, including the Southern

¹ Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, chapter II. Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.

Mountains, the Lake States and the Cut-Over area. Nor has this movement wholly ceased since 1935. Between January 1, 1936, and June 30, 1937, more than 1000 families a month entered Idaho, Washington and Oregon, two thirds of whom settled on farms. This was one and one half times as many as came from 1930 to 1935. Nearly three fourths of all these families settled on unimproved land or abandoned farms. In Montana 2000 families settled in a single county. The movement in the first three months of 1938 was running well ahead of the comparable period in 1937, according to the North West Regional Planning Board.

Migration during the 1920's behaved according to the accepted generalizations about population movements. Poor land areas lost population and larger proportions of population than good land areas. But from 1930 on to at least 1935 the poorer the land the greater the increases.¹ The areas of commercialized agriculture did not absorb their proportional share of urban migrants. In addition, with urban opportunity reduced the normal proportion of rural youth migrating to the city was reduced and this group were backed up on the farm. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that farm openings now available are only from one third to one half as many as would take care of rural youth.

Problems of urban-rural migration. This movement is not without other problems, as studies in six Indiana townships in as many counties show. Into these townships came 500 families between January, 1929, and June, 1933. Economy was the chief motive that brought them. These people went to marginal lands that even in better times had failed to support their population. They took in from \$100 to \$140 per family a year from products raised from this land.

In 1932 these newcomers took 50 per cent of the local relief funds, averaging \$25 for each of the new families. The taxes received from this group amount to only about 22 per cent of the extra costs their arrival forced upon the schools

¹ Cf. Goodrich, C., Allen, B., and Hayes, M., *Migration and Planes of Living*, chapter II. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1935.

and poor relief administrations of these townships. Obviously, as a result of this movement a considerable burden was imposed upon the local population of longer standing.¹ This is a concrete instance of the reason for the demand for federal aid for relief. The response to that demand is shown in Chapter XXIII.

In 1929, many leaders were saying that the solution of the agricultural problem was to stimulate the migration of one or two million farm families to the city, where prosperous industry would absorb their labor power. By 1933, many of these same leaders were urging a return to the soil, and colonies of unemployed urbanites are now being promoted on the basis of self-sufficing agriculture. Moreover, our President has declared himself in favor of restoring the population balance between city and country.

Will urban-rural migration last? Thus, there is a general reversal of opinion with regard to land, a reversal precipitous and dramatic, considering the long-recognized, relatively steady rural-urban migration for many decades prior to 1930.

Will the farmward movement last? Will these urban migrants stay on the soil? When prosperity returns, many, undoubtedly, will return to the city all too eagerly. There are, however, those who declare that even with prosperity, technological unemployment makes it inevitable for rural America to retain a large part of these millions of refugees from the city.

Eventualities cannot be foreseen, but the movement is bound to have large repercussions. Those whom Mother Earth succored in their hour of need will appreciate rural life anew. In the meantime, urban ways will be imported into the country. Former city folk will join in the ruralist's demand for educational and welfare facilities more comparable to the city's, and the rural school and church, the Extension

¹ Cf. Young, E. C., *Economic Effects of the Back-to-Land Movement in Marginal Farming Areas of Southern Indiana* (Purdue University, 1934), preliminary mimeographed; and also Robertson, L. S., *The Economic Significance of the Non-Farming Rural Population in Northwestern Indiana* (Lafayette, Ind., Purdue University, 1934, Bulletin 388).

Service of the Department of Agriculture, and other rural institutions will at once face new responsibilities and gain new opportunities. Local policies will be altered, and community life will be changed. The age and sex compositions of the population (to be discussed in the next chapter) will be rearranged, and if the nation moves permanently to greater federal control of social agencies, the social scientist and social planner will be faced with unexpected problems.

FARM TO FARM MIGRATION

In addition to the rural-urban and urban-rural streams of migration the farm population itself is constantly on the move. The areas of greatest mobility correlate highly with a high percentage of tenancy and share cropping and somewhat in recent years with untoward climatic conditions as charts show. Tenants move from two to six times as frequently as farm owners. Presumably migration of this sort, which probably affects more than a million farm families a year, is an effort to improve the economic conditions of the family. But such constant shifting calls for constant readjustment on the part of the family as well as on the part of social institutions and communities. There are clearly social losses too subtle to measure with precision and the change is frequently an economic gamble as well. In the long run it might be better in an average situation for the community or county to seek to so improve conditions that some of the incentive to migrate would disappear. Possibly, when further developed, the County Planning Conferences of the United States Department of Agriculture, discussed in Chapter XIX, will assist toward this end.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Trace from census reports the contribution of other states to the population of your own. Do the same for the farm population.
2. Which group in your state, rural farm, rural non-farm, or urban, shows the greatest mobility? Is the balance in favor of or against your state? How do you account for this?

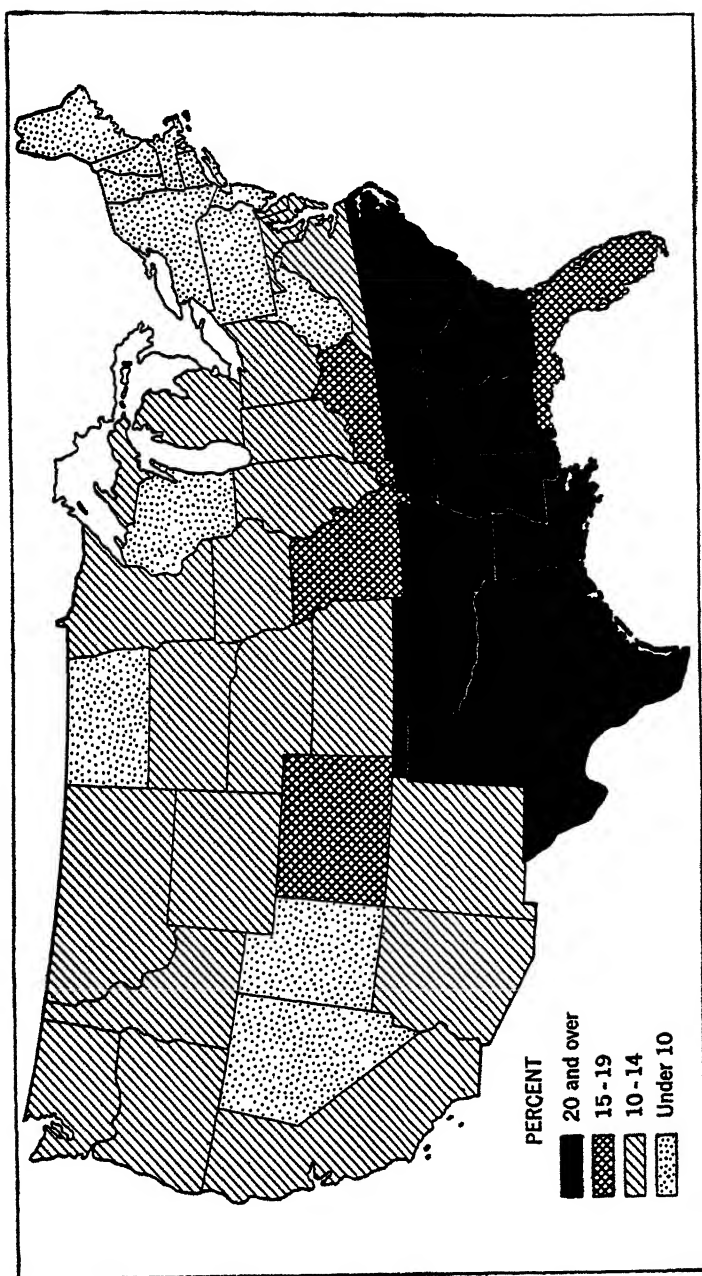


FIG. 33. FARMERS RESIDING ON THE SAME FARM LESS THAN ONE YEAR; PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF FARMS, 1935
United States Department of Agriculture.

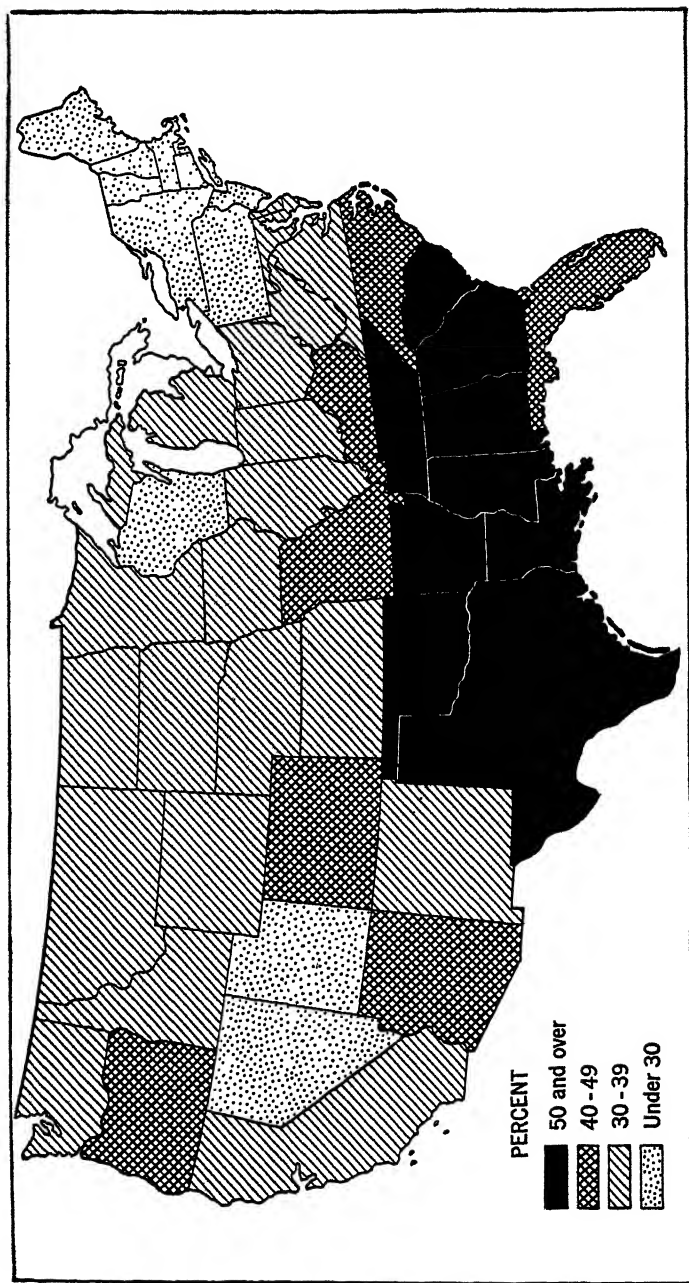


FIG. 34. FARMERS RESIDING ON THE SAME FARM LESS THAN FIVE YEARS; PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF FARMS, 1935
United States Department of Agriculture.

3. What were the causes of the rural-urban migration? Why has the trend reversed?
4. Do you regard this reversal of trend as socially desirable? Should the unemployed be helped to enter farming? Defend your opinion.
5. Select one community of which you know. Where have families gone who have left this community? Did they sell or rent? Who took their places? Trace young people who left when unmarried. Where did they go? Why? Education? Present occupation? Trace, if possible, effect of these changes in population on one or two social institutions.
6. Trace the moves of your family, or some family well known to you, as far back as you can. Give the motives for each major change in location.

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CHAPTER X

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL POPULATION

IN THE two previous chapters have been discussed the origins and distribution of our present rural population and the great migratory movements of people within our boundaries affecting that population. But nothing has been said of the characteristics of that population so far as determined by the census. It is to this subject that the discussion now turns.

To the uninitiated it is sometimes surprising how many important clues the forbidding statistical tables of the census volumes on the characteristics of given population groups furnish the sociologist seeking to explain social behavior. Sharp variations in divorce rates, for instance, are evidences of varying mores in regard to this mooted subject. An area with a large proportion of its population under twenty-one years of age is likely to have problems and attitudes in educational matters different from those of a community or section with fewer children and more older people. Where males outnumber females in the population the whole social situation is different from where the reverse is true. The discerning student of census reports has, then, an exciting exploration ahead when he turns to them for indications that help him either to explain or discover revealing facts about people. Like many explorations, however, the way is none too easy.

As noted, the term rural population as used by the United States Census included all those who live on the farm and in places of less than 2500 population. In other words, farmers and villagers were enumerated together. In 1926 studies by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, based on special tabulation of census data for 177 agricultural villages, proved what had been surmised, but never before measured,

that there were very significant differences between the rural farm and non-farm population groups. In 1930 the census provided data on this point for the first time.

VARYING TRENDS OF RURAL FARM AND NON-FARM POPULATION

It will be recalled that in Chapter VIII it was shown that the rural population had been furnishing an increasingly smaller proportion of the national total up to and including the 1930 Census. When the farm and non-farm are considered separately for 1920 and 1930, it develops that the decline, in this decade at least, resulted from the loss in the farm population, a loss incidentally entirely due to the decrease in the number of Negro and foreign-born farmers. In this decade, which is the only period for which facts are available, the rural non-farm group not only recorded a numerical gain of two points in excess of the national rate of growth, 16.1 per cent, as noted in Chapter IV, but it included also a slightly larger proportion of the total population, 19.2 per cent in 1930, as against 18.9 per cent in 1920. The net gain was from 20 to 23.6 million people. In the same decade the rural farm population had dropped from 31.3 to 30 million persons and from 29.7 to 24.6 per cent of the nation's total population.¹

Rural non-farm population of increasing importance. As Table 43 shows, this changing position of the rural-farm and non-farm groups was consistent for all census divisions, though the trend was especially marked in the South Atlantic States, where it was doubtless due to the increase in rural industrial developments, notably in textiles, and in the East North Central, Middle Atlantic, and Pacific divisions.

The increase in village population since 1900 has already been noted,² and it seems safe to conclude, therefore, that the rural non-farm population has been growing, a fact which has been unsuspected, and even denied, for some decades. There

¹ See Chapter IX for gain in farm population since 1930.

² See Chapter IV.

TABLE 43. RURAL FARM AND RURAL NON-FARM POPULATION, BY DIVISION

Census Division	Number (in thousands)				Per cent Total Population				Per cent Rural Non-Farm in Total Rural	
	Rural Farm		Rural Non-Farm		Rural Farm		Rural Non-Farm		1920	1930
	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930		
United States..	31,359	30,158	20,047	23,663	29.7	24.6	18.9	19.3	39.0	44.0
New England..	535	499	1,000	1,355	7.2	6.1	13.5	16.6	65.1	73.1
Middle Atlantic....	1,861	1,674	3,727	4,192	8.4	6.4	16.7	16.0	66.7	71.5
East North Central ..	4,887	4,453	3,539	4,049	22.8	17.6	16.5	16.0	42.0	47.6
West North Central ..	5,153	5,036	2,664	2,705	41.1	37.9	21.2	20.3	34.1	34.9
South Atlantic....	6,398	5,879	3,254	4,217	45.7	37.2	23.3	26.7	33.7	41.8
East South Central ..	5,175	5,084	1,724	2,024	53.2	51.4	19.4	20.5	25.0	28.5
West South Central ..	5,211	5,308	2,061	2,441	50.9	43.6	20.1	20.0	28.3	31.5
Mountain....	1,153	1,124	968	1,120	34.6	30.4	29.0	30.3	45.6	49.9
Pacific....	869	1,101	1,110	1,559	17.7	13.4	19.9	19.0	53.0	58.6

Source: Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *Population Bulletin*, Second Series, pp. 30 and 31.

are several indications that the rural non-farm population has continued to grow since 1930.¹ It is entirely possible, especially if economic conditions again approach those of the period from 1900 to 1929, that by 1950 or 1960 the rural farm and non-farm groups will be approximately equal. The farm group that for nearly a century of our national life comprised more than half the total population may then not even be the major element in the rural population.

Implications of rural non-farm growth. The rapid increase in the numerical and proportional importance of the rural non-farm groups compared to the farm population raises several questions. Should the schools of county, village and town agricultural areas, for instance, expand their vocational education curriculum for boys beyond the agriculture now being offered? If this is necessary, how shall such expansion be financed? Should the extension services of the colleges of agriculture serve farm people or all rural people? In other words, should this program become national, following the lead of a few states in which especially the home demonstration agents and boys' and girls' club leaders are already enrolling considerable numbers of non-farm women and youth? If this is done what changes need to be made in the programs of agricultural extension services and in the training of their personnel? Will the growing co-operation of farmers and villagers in their social and economic life, and the increasing tendency for all rural life to be organized around villages and towns be accelerated or hindered? In either case what will be the political implications? Will the farm bloc become an all rural bloc? Will the village, especially if industry decentralizes,² throw in its lot with the city or will it become powerful through holding the balance of power, under leadership not yet developed? In view of this situation what is the best policy for the city, the state, or the nation to follow in

¹ Statement based on school enrollment figures and on a 1932 questionnaire to leaders in the 140 villages surveyed in 1929-30. Rural industrial villages may, however, have lost, though such a loss would be offset by the 300,000 persons in the Citizens' Conservation Corps camps.

² For a discussion of this point see Chapter XXI.

relation to proposals affecting public policy and emanating from either or both of the great rural population groups? Should the United States Department of Agriculture or Commerce and possibly Labor develop sections that would give attention to the rural non-farm aspects of their major divisions in some such way as the Department of Interior has already done in the rural section of the Office of Education? ¹

With the growing importance of the rural farm population, socially and economically, to places of 2500 to 10,000 population, will such centers, at least those that are not chiefly suburban or industrial, become more or less rural in their economic and social services, their attitudes, and their sympathies in the future? If they become more rural, should the Census of Population change its dividing line between rural and urban from 2500 to 5000, or restore the former division at 8000, or even adopt the Census of Distribution practice of including together as "rural and small town" everything under 10,000 population? ² These and other similar questions are matters that will be of increasing concern in the next fifteen or twenty years. Their importance is made manifest by the census revelation of the growth of the rural non-farm, or village, population, and by the research and sociological analysis, summarized in Chapter V, that indicate the growing inter-relationships of the rural farm and non-farm groups. Clearly, then, the fact that the rural farm and non-farm populations show varying trends is important both in itself and because of the questions it raises.

Rural farm and non-farm population contrasts. It must be remembered, however, that the rural non-farm population has no such single occupational interest as has the farm group, diverse as agriculture is. It is made up of many elements with sharply different economic backgrounds. The bulk of it is, of course, found in villages, of which there are about

¹ For instance, does the magnitude of rural retail trade, noted in Chapter XXI, warrant a rural section in the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the Department of Commerce?

² There were 1332 places of between 2500 and 5000 population in 1930 and 851 of between 5000 and 10,000.

19,000, 10,661 of these being incorporated in 1930, as noted in Chapter IV. In these villages it will be recalled were 8,734,389 persons in 1930. Nearly another half million live in 2772 incorporated hamlets of less than 250 population.¹ Over four million more live in the more than 8000 villages that are unincorporated, many of them industrial, some of them suburban and resort. Thus something more than 13 million, or about 56 per cent of the 23.6 million rural non-farm population, live in incorporated villages and hamlets and in unincorporated places of between 250 and 2500 population. Between four and five million more reside in more than 35,000 unincorporated hamlets.² This leaves about five million persons to be accounted for. Probably hundreds of thousands, possibly a million or more of these, reside in territory immediately adjacent to villages, towns, and small cities. They belong to all intents and purposes to these municipalities.³ Other large numbers live in the uncounted crossroads centers with fewer than twenty-five persons, a number too small to list in an atlas. Others are lumberjacks, tearoom and roadhouse proprietors, and clergy of the open-country churches, teachers and many persons who commute to villages, town or cities. Some of them are part-time farmers.⁴ It will be interesting to discover in the following pages whether these differences in the population groups are associated with differences in the composition of population as revealed by the census.

Rural non-farm population older than farm. Not only are there sharp differences in rates of growth and diversity of

¹ Rural social life is being organized more and more around the agricultural village. A further analysis of the rural population is therefore important in order that the differences between the agricultural villagers and the rest of the rural non-farm population, and the meaning of these differences, may be understood.

² Estimate based on an atlas count in 1921-22 by the Institute of Social and Religious Research. Cf. Morse and Brunner, *The Town and Country Church in the United States* (New York, 1923) and Fry, *American Villagers* (New York, 1926).

³ In ten cases where house-to-house community surveys were made by the Institute of Social and Religious Research the number of such persons ranged from 2 to 10 per cent of the population of the incorporated village.

⁴ There were about 70,000 places for which incidental agricultural production schedules were returned in 1930, which qualified as farms, but which were not included in the agricultural census reports for 1930.

location between the rural farm and non-farm populations, but there are also many diversities in the makeup of their populations. Rural non-farm people are, on the average, older than those on the farms. In every age grouping above twenty years the proportion in the total population for the rural non-farm exceeds that of the farm. For instance, although the former has only 42 per cent of the total rural population, it possesses slightly over one half of the 3,110,000 rural persons sixty-five years of age and over. The percentage of the age distribution of the rural farm and non-farm groups is given in Table 44.

TABLE 44. AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR RURAL FARM AND RURAL NON-FARM POPULATION

Age group	Rural Farm				Rural Non-Farm			
	Number (in thousands)		Per Cent		Number (in thousands)		Per Cent	
	1920	1930	1920	1930*	1920	1930	1920	1930
Under 5 years	3,983	3,341	12.7	11.1	2,325	2,477	11.6	10.5
Under 1 year	784	638	2.5	2.1	461	479	2.3	2.0
5-9	4,108	3,780	13.1	12.5	2,245	2,617	11.2	11.1
10-14	3,983	3,741	12.7	12.4	2,005	2,314	10.0	9.8
15-19	3,261	3,421	10.4	11.3	1,724	2,110	8.6	8.9
20-24	2,477	2,434	7.9	8.1	1,684	2,016	8.4	8.5
25-29	2,132	1,819	6.8	6.0	1,644	1,843	8.2	7.8
30-34	1,882	1,672	6.0	5.5	1,463	1,675	7.3	7.1
35-44	3,512	3,432	11.2	11.4	2,566	3,060	12.8	12.9
45-54	2,791	2,959	8.9	9.8	1,884	2,345	9.4	9.9
55-64	1,819	1,997	5.8	6.6	1,283	1,623	6.4	6.9
65-74	972	1,105	3.1	3.7	822	1,050	4.1	4.5
75 and over	408	447	1.3	1.5	401	502	2.0	2.1

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Table 20. Population Bulletin, Second Series.*

* One tenth of one per cent, unknown.

This aging of the population is a national phenomenon, but is especially marked in the rural non-farm group. Within this group it is the agricultural villages that produce the result. They are service stations, to be sure, but they are also the home of an increasing number of retired farmers and their widows. The special analysis of the 177 agricultural villages shows this. In every region the proportion of those over 60 and especially over 70 increased more rapidly than the population as a whole between 1920 and 1930, as may be seen from Table 45.

Social significance of age. This aging population in the nation as a whole, as well as in rural America, has certain

TABLE 45. RATE OF INCREASE FOR TOTAL POPULATION 1920-1930 AND FOR POPULATION 60 YEARS AND OVER, BY SEX — 177 VILLAGES
(Per cent increase)

Region	Total Population	60-69 Years	70 years and over	60 years and over
Males				
Middle Atlantic.	9.0	8.9	21.3	13.9
South *	10.5	8.4	46.5	20.8
Middle West . .	2.5	-6.0	16.0	3.5
Far West . . .	11.4	26.4	35.7	29.9
Females				
Middle Atlantic .	5.8	9.7	14.1	11.7
South *	11.6	26.6	27.4	26.9
Middle West . . .	2.2	17.2	28.7	20.3
Far West	16.5	42.2	35.1	39.3

* Includes both whites and Negroes

rather important implications. In census terms, at least, our young nation was built by youth. It was the adventurous and the youthful who followed the westering sun to the Pacific, who grappled with the frontier, settled and exploited the Mid-West, conquered the Rockies and tamed the Far West. As a population ages, it loses some of the traits of youth. It becomes conservative, less hospitable to new ideas, and it values security above all else. An aging population amidst the problems of the post-war world may then be a disadvantage unless its normal results can be combated by adult education, which is discussed in Chapter XIX.

In terms of the agricultural village this picture is reduced to miniature scale. A considerable portion of the inhabitants must conserve their resources. They seek peace, not opportunity; quiet, not life. They are likely to dwell in the past. They see little necessity for change or improvement. They are frequently out of sympathy with youth. Moreover, their relative financial security and their greater leisure give them sometimes a disproportionate voice in the affairs of the community and its social organizations.

Rural farm population has more children. The lower average age among the rural farm people proves that children make up a larger share of the whole group than among the rural

non-farm group. Taken together, however, these two groups, comprising our total rural population, possess more than half the nation's children under fifteen years of age. This fact has great significance for the nation and its educational systems and gives to rural education a significance often underestimated. This matter is discussed in Chapter XVII.

The National Resources Committee estimates¹ that the rural population, as of 1930, was producing slightly more than one and one half times the number of children needed to sustain its total at the level of that year, to be precise, 169 per cent of the needed number for the rural farm and 137 per cent for the non-farm population. These figures are based on the native whites. On the other hand, the urban white population has a deficiency of 14 per cent in its reproductive rate and the Negroes of 28 per cent. The rate in cities of over 100,000 population is even lower.

The proportion of children in the total and even among the rural farm population, however, is decreasing. In the native white population the decline was about as rapid in the rural as in the urban territory, but since it is more recent, and tends to be localized according to the distance of population from the city, as shown in Chapter VI, the present reproduction ratio of the farm population is still twice as high as in the large cities.

This lower birth rate is again more marked in the agricultural village population than in other elements of the rural non-farm group, judging by the sample of 177 alluded to above. One measurement of this is the ratio of children under 10 to women 20 to 45 years of age. This ratio was 99.6 in 1920, but 95.7 in 1930. In the Southern and Far-Western States the ratio declined more than 7 points.

The decline in fertility between 1910 and 1930 for native whites was 12.3 per cent for the rural and 4.8 per cent for the urban population.² No data exist to determine to what extent

¹ *The Problems of a Changing Population*, National Resources Committee, May, 1938, p. 134. United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. This very important publication should be considered throughout in connection with this and the preceding chapter.

² *Ibid.*, p. 127.

if at all this decline is caused by the spread of the practice of attempting to control the number of children born or whether subtler influences are at work. Certain it is that a profound social change has occurred.

The charts on page 245 show clearly that the highest birth rates are in the South and certain other areas of below average economic opportunity. One half of the eight states with fertility ratios of from 60 to 100 per cent above the requirements of a stationary population are in this region. Taken together with other data given in this chapter and with the facts presented in *Problems of a Changing Population* two generalizations seem warranted. First, that the cities have produced not more than half their present population. The rest has come from rural America and immigrants. Second, that if normal rural-urban migration trends, discussed in the last chapter, are restored, the majority of the urban population from 1950 to 1970 is now in rural America. This again shows the importance to the nation and the cities of good rural education and other social utilities.

That the rural decline is likely to continue for a while, barring easing of immigration laws or other unforeseen events, seems clear from a study of the age distribution of the rural population as given previously in Table 45. If the decline in the rural birth rate continues, and if the large cities are no longer able to sustain their present population, the period of the nation's maximum population is apparently not far distant. Recent estimates place the peak year as between 1950 and 1970 and the maximum population at 150,000,000.² Such an eventuality will have far-reaching consequences in a nation that has always looked forward to having more persons to feed and clothe tomorrow than today. Some economists and business analysts have already pointed to the slackening rate of population increase as one of the reasons for the delay in recovering from the Great Depression.

² Baker, O. E., "Rural-Urban Migration and the National Welfare," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, June, 1933; Thompson and Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States*. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1933.

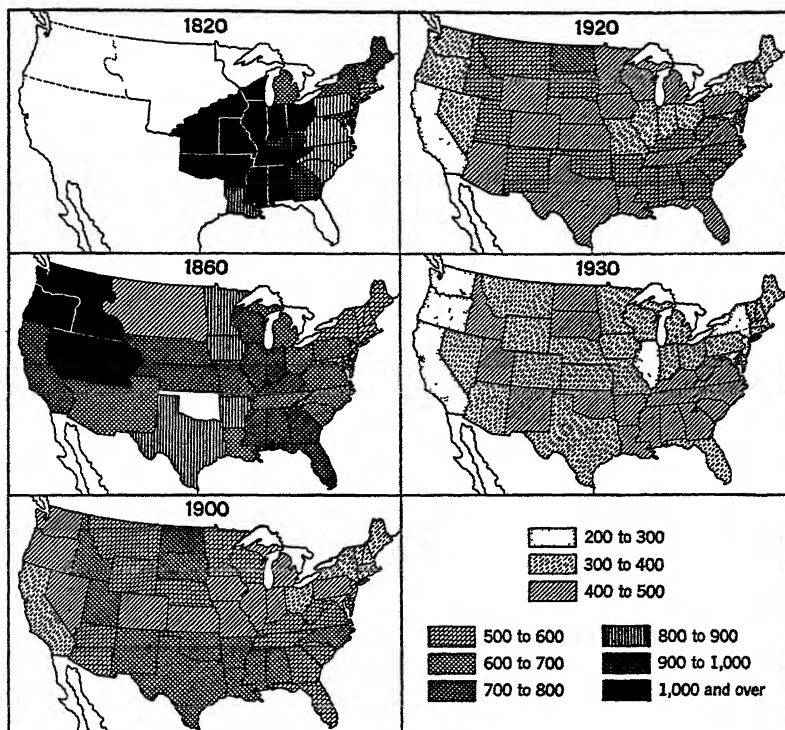


FIG. 35. NUMBER OF WHITE CHILDREN UNDER 5 PER 1000 WHITE WOMEN AGED 15-49, 1820-1930

Source: U S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics. *The Problems of a Changing Population*, Report of the Committee on Population Problems to the National Resources Committee, May, 1938, p. 124. United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1938.

Varying age and sex ratios. Another interesting difference relates to the ratio of males to females in the population. In the United States in 1910 there were 106 males to every 100 females, but the proportion has been falling steadily, so that the figure was 102.5 in 1930. This is one of the places in which the rural farm and non-farm groups follow different patterns. Among the former the proportion of males has increased, as would be expected from the facts given on the migration of young women in Chapter IX. The ratio in 1930 was 111.0 to 100 as against 109.1 in 1920. In the urban population there were fewer males than females — 98.1. Moreover, when the agricultural villages are considered separately, on the basis of the special tabulation this ratio is found to be only 95.1. It is perhaps about stabilized, since the 1920 figure was 95.5.

The sex ratio is frequently an indication of the age of a community, area or social group. For example, while agriculture is a family occupation its laborers are men. Moreover, as was shown earlier, sons are somewhat less likely to leave the farm than daughters. Areas like the Pacific and Mountain States also have a large majority of men in the population, for pioneer belts always attract and need more men than women. The states of these census divisions which are not long out of the pioneering stage have from 107 to 157 men to every 100 women in the rural farm and non-farm populations.

These ratios are socially significant. Where there is a majority of males the proportion of single women decreases, that of single men increases. Social organization takes on a masculine slant. Ladies' Aid societies are not the force in the cattle country or in the rural industrial village that they are in some Eastern agricultural villages where there are five females to every four males. The sex ratio is also related to the proportion of the population in church. This varies inversely with the proportion of males.

The most significant factor in relation to age, apart from the growing proportion of older people, is the increase in the number of youth. As a result of population trends long opera-

tive the United States has reached its peak of population for the years 16 to 24. The precise situation cannot be determined until the 1940 census results are available, but it appears that the number of youth who have come into the years of potential employment since 1929 roughly equal the average number of unemployed from 1937 to 1939 inclusive. The slackened migration of the 1930's has backed up in rural America a large number of youth, as will be further brought out in Chapter XII. The seriousness of this situation is shown by the fact that trends of employment opportunity appear to be in inverse ratio to population fertility.

Marital status. The marital status of the population proves one of the statements just made. The proportion of single persons 15 years and over in the United States seems slowly but surely to be declining. In the United States as a whole 34.1 per cent of the males and 26.4 per cent of the females 15 years of age and over are unmarried, but in the rural farm population 36.5 of the males of this age group are single, but only 25.2 per cent of the females.

The proportion of persons who admitted that they were divorced when interviewed by the census enumerator is small, but increasing: 1.3 per cent of the males and 1.4 per cent of the females were so recorded in 1930. The rural farm proportion for each sex was about half this figure. This probably reflects a more conservative attitude toward divorce among farm people than among urban people.

It is likely that variations in the rate of population change influence all these population characteristics. Few if any studies on this point for the smaller political units exist, though it would be a simple matter to assemble the data from unpublished census reports. An indication of what may happen is found in an analysis made on the basis of the 177 villages. Thirty-eight of these increased more rapidly than the national rate between 1920 and 1930. Twenty-five lost more than 10 per cent of their population in this census period. When the two groups were compared it was found that the growing villages had a higher birth rate, a larger proportion of children and of

adults of both sexes up to forty years of age, as well as a higher ratio of males to females,¹ despite the fact that migration of population accounted for a considerable portion of their gain.

Rural population more homogeneous. Another significant characteristic of the rural population is its greater homogeneity as compared with the urban. Barely 3 per cent — slightly less than 1.1 million persons of the farm population — are foreign-born. The farm foreign-born, moreover, come largely from northern Europe, have been in this country a considerable time, and are, therefore, well assimilated with American life.² Rural America, save for some industrial villages, has no counterpart to the Little Italys, the Ghettoes, and the similar foreign communities of the cities. Its social organization and political life is, therefore, less divided by racial lines than is often the case in cities.

The Negro. In the South, however, the Negro is an important element in the rural population, although of course he is almost never foreign-born. Nearly three fifths of the almost 12,000,000 Negroes are rural and almost 4.7 millions are on the farm. All but about 72,000 of these are in the South. They comprise, in fact, about 35 per cent of the farm population of the South. Similarly, about 90 per cent of the Negroes in the rural non-farm population are in the South and account for 20 per cent of the population of this group in this region.

In this region the Negro population is more separate in its social organizations than are the foreign-born in the cities. They have their own schools, churches, and social organizations. Space is lacking to analyze in any detail the census records for this one race, but such an analysis would show somewhat distinctive population characteristics, a few of which run counter to popular supposition; it would record a great cityward and northward migration; and it would reveal the struggle of the Negro toward security through land-ownership, and the disproportionately crushing losses of the depression,

¹ Cf. Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1933), p. 31, for the detailed statistics of this comparison.

² Cf. Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children* (New York, 1928), for a study of this population group and their social organization.

as well as the steady building-up of a business and professional group from its own race to serve its own people. In comparison with the social and economic institutions of the white race in the South, those of the rural Negro appear poor and inadequate. In view of the status of the Negro seventy years ago the progress has been indeed considerable.¹

The farm population, then, as compared to other groups has proportionately more children, more males, more single men, fewer single women, and more homogeneity.

AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES COMPARED WITH CITIES

One other significant population comparison remains. This chapter has shown the significant differences in the rural farm and non-farm groups. It has also indicated that a majority of the rural non-farm population lives in villages. But, as noted, villages are of various types; they may be industrial, suburban, and resort as well as agricultural. The last named are, however, the most important and numerous and the most closely related to the farm population in many ways. Data has already been presented on some points, showing that these agricultural villages have a different pattern of population structure from the total rural non-farm group of which they are a part. Because of the importance of these villages it is desirable to summarize the characteristics of their population and compare them with the farm and urban population. In making this comparison for 1920 and 1930, the 177 agricultural villages previously mentioned were used. For the urban data a group of 38 medium-sized cities in the same states, and as far as possible, sections of states in which the villages were located, were selected. All these cities had well-diversified industries.²

¹ Cf. Johnson, *The Shadow of the Plantation*. Chicago, 1934.

² The comparisons of two dozen items for these three populations, farm, agricultural, and village and city, for 1920 and 1930, are complicated. The complete statistical summary is presented in the authors' *Rural Social Trends* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1933), pp. 34-36 inclusive. The text summary here given is quoted from the same work.

In summary these comparisons show that in certain respects the village population is more like that of the city than the country. In other respects the village population is more like that of the country than the city. In terms of the changes that have taken place in the last decade they show that though the village may be more like the city or country, both city and country by 1930 had become more like the village in the composition of its population than was the case in 1920.

In 1930, village population resembled urban more than farm in the ratio of persons under 21 attending school, in illiteracy ratios, in the ratio of males to females, the proportion married and single, the ratio of children to women 20 to 45 years of age, and the proportion of minors in the population.

In such important matters as the proportions of native and foreign-born white in the population, the ratio of children to women 20 to 45 years of age, and the proportions in many of the age groups, the village, city, and farm populations were more nearly alike in 1930 than in 1920.

It seems apparent, therefore, despite certain regional differences on one item or another, that in important respects the village population structure is tending to become a middle-point which city and farm populations are approaching. It is possible that this is simply an accident or coincidence, but it is a point that should be observed when the 1940 census returns are available. If, as sociologists have foretold, the population of the United States is to reach a maximum in the next twenty or thirty years, it is possible that the composition of the village population of today is indicative of what the composition of national population will be in 1950 and 1960.

THE OCCUPATIONS OF RURAL PEOPLE

Thus far the discussion has been concerned with the characteristics of the rural population, the farm elements and the non-farm elements in a special group of agricultural villages. But whatever the age, sex, or location of people they must

live, and how they live is a matter of major importance. An earlier chapter has partially answered this question in the case of agricultural villages. This chapter concerns itself, then, with the main categories of rural population, farm and non-farm.

Agricultural employment less important. Before presenting the 1930 data, however, it is interesting to note the steady decline in the importance of agriculture among the major occupations, as measured by the proportion of all gainfully employed in it. In 1870, when there were half as many farms as in 1930, 24 per cent of the gainfully employed were farmers and almost as large a proportion, 23.1 per cent, were farm laborers. Thus nearly half the gainfully employed were agriculturists. There was a very slight increase in the proportion of farmers by 1880, but from then on a steady decline set in. By 1930 only 12.4 per cent of the gainfully employed were classed as farmers and 9 per cent as farm laborers. In other words, in sixty years the proportion of those employed in agriculture declined by more than half, despite a numerical gain of nearly five million persons in the farm population. None the less, when males alone are considered, one person in every four of those employed in the United States in 1930 was engaged in agriculture. The only larger group was that engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries.¹

The 1930 data. Turning to the most recent census data on occupations, that for 1930, one finds that more males ten years of age and over are gainfully employed among the farm population than in the rural non-farm groups, but that among the females the position is exactly reversed. This is to be expected from the previous discussion on the migration of males and females from the farm and reflects the relative employment

¹ Cf. Hansen, Alvin, "Industrial Class Alignments in the United States and Industrial Classes in the United States in 1920," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, December, 1920, and December, 1922, and also in vol. 77, pp. 199-203, of the same, a note by Sogge, T. M., on "Industrial Classes in the United States in 1930." See also Fry, *American Villages* (New York, Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1926), Appendix B, pp. 135-40, and chapter VII for a socio-economic classification of the gainfully employed in agricultural villages in 1920.

possibilities in agriculture for women. The city has more employment than either. The exact proportions of those employed ten years of age and over follow:

	Total United States	Urban	Rural Farm	Rural Non- Farm
Male.....	76.2	77.6	76.1	72.2
Female.....	22.1	27.3	12.3	17.2

The smaller proportion of employed males in the rural non-farm population is another evidence of the large proportion of unemployed males, frequently retired farmers, in the village population.

Occupations of farm population. All but a million of the 8,308,530 employed males in the farm population are engaged in agricultural pursuits. This is 89.1 per cent of the total. Four and one tenth per cent more are in manufacturing and mechanical industries. No other major occupational category takes more than 2 per cent. Among the females 62.8 per cent of the 1,326,130 employed are agriculturists. Of these a quarter million are farmers or farm managers and almost 600,000 laborers, three fourths of them on their home farm and not receiving a cash wage. Domestic and personal service and professional service, largely school teaching, are the only other considerable groups, engaging 15.1 and 12.4 per cent respectively.

Rural non-farm occupations. The rural non-farm group naturally presents quite a different picture. Agriculture enlists but one eighth of the seven million gainfully employed males, and of these more than three fourths are laborers. The mechanical and manufacturing industries lead with more than three tenths, or over 2.1 million persons. Over one third of these are in industries definitely related to agriculture or soil products such as textiles, food, leathers, clay and glass industries and sawmills. One fourth are in the building trades, most of them being artisans of various types.

No other major category uses as many as one sixth of the rural non-farm employed males, but trade and transportation take more than one seventh each. The next largest group is

concerned with the extraction of minerals, just under one tenth.

Employment of women. Among the 1.5 million employed rural non-farm females, more than one third are engaged in various forms of personal and domestic service. Professional service and employment in the manufacturing and mechanical industries follow with just over one fifth each. More than half the latter are in industries depending on the soil for raw materials. Trade claims one eighth. No other group takes as many as one in twenty. Table 46 gives the full details. The significant aspects of the employment situation in agricultural villages have already been noted in Chapter IV.

TABLE 46. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED PERSONS TEN YEARS OLD AND OVER FOR RURAL FARM AND NON-FARM POPULATION, 1930

Industry Group	Total for U. S.		Rural Farm		Rural Non-Farm	
	M	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
All industries....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture.....	25.1	8.5	89.1	62.8	12.1	3.7
Forestry and fishing....	0.7		0.5		2.4	0.1
Extraction of minerals. . .	3.0	0.1	0.9		9.8	0.2
Manufacturing	31.3	22.4	4.1	4.8	31.0	20.4
Transportation	10.5	4.2	2.0	0.9	13.8	4.8
Trade.....	15.3	15.9	1.5	3.1	14.3	12.6
Public service.....	2.5	1.1	0.2		2.9	0.9
Professional service.....	4.4	16.4	0.7	12.4	5.1	20.6
Domestic and personnel service	4.4	29.2	0.3	15.1	3.7	35.3
Industry not specified....	2.9	2.2	0.7	0.9	4.9	1.4

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*

In summary this chapter has shown that the rural population has certain distinctive traits, such as its high proportion of children and males, its low proportion of divorced people, and its homogeneity. It has shown that this rural population is made up of two great groups, rural farm and rural non-farm. The latter grew more rapidly than the nation as a whole during the 1920's when the farm population registered a decrease. It has also characteristics somewhat different from the rural farm population. It contains fewer children and more older people, especially in the agricultural villages, where the largest single group of the rural non-farm population lives.

Despite their rural surroundings, the characteristics of the agricultural villagers resemble those of the city population in some respects more than they do those of the farm. It has been made clear also the extent to which rural living affects the occupations of these two groups. Agriculture is obviously the chief occupation of the farm population, but mechanical industries and trade are the chief concerns of the rural non-farm population.

This description of the types of people in the rural population and of their ways of earning a living has given no hint of another factor of both importance and interest in the study of any major population group; namely, its psychological characteristics. To a discussion of this elusive subject the next chapter turns.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Compare the growth or decline since 1920 of the urban, the total rural and the rural farm and non-farm population in your state. Account for the results you discover. (*United States Census of Population*, vol. III, 1930, State Tables.)
2. Make a list of the states and census regions which have gained and of those which have lost farm population since 1920. (*United States Census of Population*, vol. III, 1930.)
3. Make a simple chart showing the proportion of farm, of village, and of urban population in each of the following age groups: under 15 years; 15 to 44 years; 45 years and over. (See Truesdell, L. E., *Farm Population of the United States*, p. 83.)
4. Discuss two or three important social implications of the age and sex distribution, first of the farm and second of the village population as contrasted with the urban.
5. Make a list of non-agricultural occupations engaged in by members of farm households of which you know. How many of these occupations, and which, involve urban contacts? How many, and which, involve contacts with towns or villages?
6. Which occupations in villages do you think are on the increase and which on the decrease?
7. Trace the trends in the size of farm family by census regions, states, or counties and explain this trend.

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See also population sections of any standard rural sociology and population censuses of the United States, especially 1920 and 1930.

CHAPTER XI

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL PEOPLE

BECAUSE of the popular belief, among city people at least, that rural people are in some way inferior to their city cousins, it might not be impertinent to inquire at this point into the matter of rural and urban intelligence and characteristics, and try to analyze first, the scientific data now existing with regard to this question, and secondly, certain matters of common observation.

That the rural population is in a measure distinct from the urban has been reiterated in the course of this book; but the distinction has been projected almost entirely from the point of view of economics and sociology. This chapter will try to focus the attention on the psychological aspects of the differences between the farmer and the villager, and between them both and the city resident.

Conditions make such comparisons difficult. It is important at the outset to warn the reader against the pitfalls of such a discussion. The most minute observation, and the most voluminous tests can give us sufficient data on which to base only the largest generalities. American culture in the present century has shown a steady progress towards standardization. As a result of the amazing achievements in the sphere of locomotion and communication, the continent has been narrowed to the extent that the Pacific is now only twelve hours away from the Atlantic by plane, and that a radio broadcast can be heard simultaneously in California and on the Eastern coast. Time has been annihilated and space has been materially diminished. Both rural and urban people are responding to a greater number of stimuli than ever before. They listen to the same coast-to-coast broadcasts, ride in the same automobiles, witness the same movies, have the same advertisement thrust at them in their daily papers, from posters, or from barn walls.

They eat the same breakfast food, buy the same coffee, smoke the same cigarettes, and what is more, wear clothes of the same cut and style. There is now no such cleavage in much of the United States between the provincial and the urbanite as in any European country. In the very matter of language alone, our dialects have tended to run together, so that the rustic and the sophisticate, Westerner and Easterner, not only as a rule read the same literature but understand each other readily. Contrast with that a pocket-sized country like England, or a larger one like Germany, where the man from the North understands with difficulty the man from the South, and where the provincial with his peculiar dialect speaks what amounts almost to a foreign language in the eyes of the townsman. The chasm between rural and urban in more backward countries like Hungary and Italy is even wider: there the peasant affects a particular mode of dress, speaks a dialect distinct from that of the city, and the amenities of his daily life are far removed from those of his town or city cousin.

Are Americans all alike? In a democratic country such as ours the tendency has always been toward a leveling of all classes, a fact which is proved by the usual taunt thrown at America by visitors when they say, "Your land is all alike. Every town is like the next. Every Main Street resembles every other Main Street." Far from being a taunt, this statement is an illustration of the fact that we have leveled out at least the material aspects of our civilization; our towns, villages, and cities are alike — the town is only the village multiplied, and the city is only an expanded town — because we have spread the good things of life to a great extent all over the country. For example, our concrete roads and the widespread use of electricity, to mention only the most obvious instruments of civilization, penetrate many rural areas as well as the wealthy cities. All classes, the pauper who accepts relief in the crowded tenement and sometimes the farmer as well may enjoy steam heat and have the benefit of inside plumbing and running water.

Similarities apparent. Our enormous natural resources, our

post-war prosperity, have tended to equalize rural and urban, so that no longer is the distinction as clear-cut as in the days of William Dean Howells or Mark Twain, whose uncivilized country types are now remote and antiquated. If you read a current novel of farm life like *As the Earth Turns*, which depicts the process of assimilation of foreign-born farmers in so Americanized a section as New England, you are at once aware of the amazing equalization of our racial and economic groups, and you notice especially how much our farmers, particularly the younger ones, resemble our city residents. Their scheme of life duplicates, more than is possible in other lands, that of their city relatives. They do the same things — go to the same kind of dances and parties, indulge in the same social games, and conduct their domestic or commercial affairs in much the same fashion as the townsman, villager, or cityman.

The chief reasons for the *rapprochement* between urban and rural, as before intimated, are our educational system, our facilities for communication and transportation and the mobility of our population. Our country schools follow the lead of our city schools and disseminate generally the same type of information; even many of their extra-curricular activities are similar. Our newspapers tend to print the same news in city and country — a scandal like the Lindbergh kidnaping receives the same exaggerated treatment in the paper of Pumpkin Hollow as in the New York dailies. Again, the farmer's son goes to the city, acquires some of its veneer, and when he returns for a visit or protracted stay, leaves it with his rustic family. In what ways, then, are rural and urban psychological traits different?

In spite of these centripetal forces of standardization, certain traits and qualities peculiar to rural people have not yet been ironed out nor, perhaps, will they ever be. Although the appellation "farmer" no longer has the same precise, almost contemptuous meaning it had twenty-five years ago, when the heroes of all rustic novels ran off to the city to get rid of their opprobrious characteristics, the word still stands for more than an occupational class. Certain traits peculiar to the farmer

have remained, and as we shall indicate, they are the traits which the cityman, so amenable to change and alteration, might very well admire.

MEASURING RURAL INTELLIGENCE

Many psychologists have attempted to prove that there is a visible objective difference between the rural and urban mind. They have conducted innumerable tests for the past twenty years to bring out the fact that the native intelligence of the country resident not only differs from but tends to be inferior to that of the cityman. These investigations are fraught with so many dangers — since intelligence is the most difficult of all human characteristics to isolate — that we must study the results with great care and try to indicate wherein they are fallacious.

Defining intelligence. Probably few persons under twenty-one in this country have escaped having their intelligence measured. Tests purporting to do this have been printed and used by the million in our public and private schools, colleges, and universities. The result has been that the I.Q., the Intelligence Quotient, has become one of the most widely used scientific terms. From this the reader might gather that doubtless the psychologists have discovered an infallible technique for the precise evaluation of each individual's intelligence. Such a conclusion should be held in abeyance for the nonce, at least, until the psychologists are better able to isolate and define *intelligence*.

Strange as it may seem, some textbooks give enormous space to intelligence testing and its results but do not define intelligence. Others remark that there are different kinds of intelligence, such as social and intellectual and mechanical, and give theories about and criteria for judging intelligence.¹ Some admit that intelligence is not easily defined and attempt several definitions, as Dashiell does.²

¹ Cf. for instance, Trow, W. C., *Educational Psychology*, pp. 137 ff. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931.

² *Fundamentals of Objective Psychology*, pp. 304-05, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928. Dashiell's conclusion is eminently worth remembering: "That the methods of

Sociologists, who have to deal with people in the mass, who must take account of individual intelligences and try to apprehend group intelligence as well, will perhaps prefer the simple and workable definition of Sorokin and Zimmerman: "Intelligence is that combination of mental factors which the individual is supposed to use in achieving some aim or goal in life or the ability to adjust himself adequately to a new situation."^{*} They point out that there is disagreement as to the respective contributions of inherited and environmental factors in intelligence, and conclude that "it is probably a composition of the two certain innate abilities polished by the environments both mental and social." In essence, the best definition of intelligence is that it is the ability to learn.

Beyond question, the so-called intelligence tests, as Dashiell says, are measuring important capacities, and are the closest approximate measure of intelligence yet devised. Their results have a high correlation with school achievements and with certain types of success in life, although, of course, this correlation can be interpreted to mean either that the tests simply measure school achievement in a different way or that intelligence is responsible for the scores made in both tests and school subjects. But though of great practical value in the schools, they are far from infallible in all cases. Our concern with them is to discover what they reveal when rural and urban people are compared.

Prerequisites for comparative testing. In order to attain some degree of accuracy in measuring two groups it is necessary to equalize as many factors as possible and reduce the number of variables, some of which are, considering that the subjects are usually children, the chronological age, social and economic status, environment, language, amount and type of schooling, size of family and order of the subject's birth, and the occupa-

examination [of intelligence] get at some capacity or capacities has been abundantly shown, even if *what* they get at remains in doubt. The capacity can be isolated in fact if not in words. And in any case, there is some point to the claim that 'Measurements should precede definition.'"

^{*} *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, Part III, p. 234. Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1929.

tions of their parents. For instance, a comparison of rural and urban intelligence based on New York City school children and the children in an all-rural county in Mississippi introduces many more variables than a comparison of these rural children with the children of Jackson, Mississippi's largest city. In other words, the scores obtained in these tests are largely invalidated for purposes of group comparison when the environment of any one group varies sharply from that of the other. This seems self-evident, but has often been somewhat overlooked, especially in some of the earlier attempts to compare rural and urban intelligence.

Rural and urban intelligence test scores compared. Most of the studies have been carried on with school children. There are two reasons for this: first, measurements are of great value to the schools in the general study of their students, in many problems of grading, program guidance and adjustment; second, the younger the subject, the more pristine his intelligence and the less he is likely to be influenced by variable environmental factors.

In the twelve or fifteen years prior to 1929 about two score studies were made, important because of the standing of their authors, the techniques they used, or the results obtained, in which the intelligence of rural people, almost exclusively children, was measured and compared with similar urban scores. More than two thirds of these tests place rural children below urban, and a large majority of the investigators believe that the difference is a measure of difference in the native ability or intelligence of the two groups, a difference many of them explain by the assumption that the rural-urban migration deprived the country of many of its more intelligent children. In view of the huge size of the rural-urban migration, to say nothing of the causes and consequences of it, discussed in preceding chapters, this is a vulnerable assumption. When we examine it critically, a number of questions arise, which, in the judgment of the authors, seem to throw doubt on, if not entirely to vitiate, the conclusions of the psychologists as to the innate differences in rural and urban intelligence.

What is rural and urban? It was shown, for instance, in Part I that rural and urban are no longer clear-cut divisions. Rural characteristics vary markedly according to the distance from the city, as measured by concentric tiers of counties. Furthermore, during the 1920's, when these tests were being made, rural-urban migration was at its height and at least some of the city schools tested had had a considerable infiltration of rural migrants. Strictly speaking, the latter should have been separated from older residents in the scoring. Such a procedure was actually followed, in a small Iowa city, by Hornell Hart, who procured a difference in the score of 248 children from the farms compared with 447 from the city of $2.3 \pm .6$. This difference may have been influenced by several variables. Nothing is known of the reasons why the families of these rural children moved to town. If they migrated in order to get better educational opportunities, the chief variable would then be the type of school from which the farm children came. But they may have migrated also because of their failure on the farm, in which case another important variable would be introduced, rendering the difference of 2.3 of little significance in the main problem of determining whether, as a generality, rural children are inferior in intelligence to urban children.

Moreover, some psychologists have no adequate definition of the terms rural and urban. One study took all places over 1000 as urban, although in places up to 10,000 there are a considerable proportion of open-country children in the schools, as Chapter XVII shows. In several others, places of from 2000 to 3400 were included in the urban category. This confusion of terms resulting in the introduction of varying proportions of farm children in the urban enrollment, invalidates the results for comparative purposes.

Importance of homogeneity. One of the important factors in group intelligence testing is that of homogeneity. The rural farm population, having relatively few foreign-born, and outside the South, few Negroes, and hardly any Orientals except in California, is far more homogeneous than urban population in general. This homogeneity extends in great measure even to

the rural non-farm element, which can be classified in fewer occupational groups than urban workers. The meaning of all this is that stimuli arising from such variables as environment and occupation are less diversified among rural than urban children. As will be shown later, however, the urban population undoubtedly contains more persons of distinction than the rural.

Influence of occupation. When tests are given in bona fide rural and especially open-country schools, the comparison with urban scores resolves itself into a comparison of the children of one or a few occupational groups with those whose parents belong to many occupational groups. Perhaps the fairest and most scientific method would be to divide both rural and urban children according to the occupations of their fathers, comparing, for example, the offspring of farmers with those of laborers, professional men, and so on. But even such a separation would not get rid of the fact that a majority of rural and urban test scores do not take into account differences in the efficiency of the schools attended by the children of both groups, as well as differences in their experiences and cultural opportunities.

Differences in schooling. For example, the urban school term, as noted in Chapter XVII, is on the average ten working days longer than that of the village school and about a month longer than that of the one-room school. Urban teachers are older, more experienced, and better trained than rural. It seems quite likely that these phenomena influence the intelligence test scores even when, within the rural group, one-room and consolidated schools are compared. Such variations in educational opportunity clearly affected the measurements in the study conducted by Baldwin, Filmore, and Hadley, who gave the Stanford-Binet Tests to 253 children in one-room schools and to 425 of comparable ages in consolidated schools with the following results:¹

	I.Q.	Below Av	Percentage Av.	Above Av.
1 room school	91.7	43	47	10
Consolidated.	99.4	23	54	23

¹ *Farm Children*, pp. 238 ff. D. Appleton & Co., 1930.

The authors' commentary follows:

The differences between the main I.Q.'s on the first examination of the one-room and consolidated school children, analyzed statistically by age groups, six to fourteen inclusive, are found to be significant at all ages except seven and eight. This likeness among the school children continues the similarity found among the pre-school children at all ages in the two communities and suggests that rural children are much alike in the pre-school and early school years, but with the advance in age some influence that produces differences begins to operate....

It is obvious that there are a number of variables at work here and that the differences in scores cannot safely be attributed to the single factor of intelligence. This agrees with the conclusion of a study of nearly 5000 rural children located in two Eastern and two Middle Western States.¹

Environment influential. If this conclusion is sound when rural children are measured and compared according to type of schooling, it seems clear that when the rural and urban groups are compared for general intelligence the variables are multiplied and the difficulty of measuring pure intelligence increases. But since, as indicated, environment begins to become increasingly important with age, some clue to the solution of the problem may be had by measuring children of a younger age. Acting on this assumption, the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station tested 72 rural and 72 city babies matched for chronological age. No significant difference was found in the results, but on these tests there were five sub-tests in which rural children succeeded earlier than city children, and seven sub-tests in which city children succeeded earlier than those living on farms.² The authors of this exhaustive study conclude that at no age do rural children in one community differ strikingly from those of another, or from the general mental level, while rural and urban children seem to be equal in intelligence until the age of five.³ This suggests a bias in those cognate tests of

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children*, chap. III. Harper & Bros., New York, 1929.

² Baldwin, Filmore, and Hadley, *Farm Children*, pp. 233-34.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 234-38.

children of a higher age level where differences between rural and urban develop.

Testing experiences. On the whole, the tests often measure acquaintanceship with types of experience which are more largely urban than rural,¹ and with, on the whole, book knowledge rather than experience. The alleged inferiority of any group over another may, therefore, perhaps be laid to the instruments used in testing rather than to any innate differences in the groups themselves, a conclusion which was reached by M. E. Shimberg, who conducted an *Investigation into the Validity of Norms with Special Reference to Urban and Rural Groups*, in which two information tests, A, scaled to the experience of rural children, and B to that of urban children, were taken by both rural and urban subjects. Some questions overlapped. On the urban-scaled test, rural children, as compared with urban, were about one year retarded; on the rural-scaled test, the opposite situation was found. The author concludes:

Test A is more specialized in favor of rural children than Test B (or any standard test) is specialized in favor of the urban children.

From the same analysis we produced evidence that questions "fair" to a certain group cannot be selected *a priori*. This was also affirmed by submitting our questions to 14 rural superintendents who, despite their unusually rich experience, were unable to designate correctly (in a fairly large percentage of the cases) which questions favored the rural children.

An analysis of current standard group tests shows that a large part of the material required is informational in character. So, our results may be said to have some application outside the narrow sphere of individual information tests.²

Some of the items in the rural test follow:

Name the young of the sheep, cow, horse.

Name *three* states in the United States where cotton is raised.

¹ An interesting case of bias comes from a test made by a university in a fishing village known to the authors. Among others, the word-association technique was used. Following the word *rain* the pupil was supposed to write *umbrella*. Practically all put down instead the word *slicker*, signifying oil-skins, which offers almost complete protection from wet weather. This reply was scored wrong.

² For a full report of this study see *The Archives of Psychology*, nos. 99-104, vol. xvi, chap. vii.

Why is it necessary to limit the hunting season?
In what part of the day are the shadows longest?
How can you tell poison ivy by looking at it?
How many pecks are there in a bushel?
Of what use are insects to flowers?
Name *five* wild flowers.
Why does seasoned wood burn more easily than green wood?
Tell one way of finding out the age of a tree.
From what does maple sugar come?
Name *two* birds that stay North in the winter.
How can you keep milk from souring?
Give one reason for the rotation of crops.
Name *five* crops.
What kind of dairy cow gives the richest milk?
Why are crops hoed?
Name *two* differences between the barks of birch and oak trees.

The army tests. It is necessary to consider the army tests in passing because they have often been used to support the contention of the backwardness of rural intelligence. These tests have unfortunately been misused in many ways by scientific popularizers ever since their publication. The army tests were narrowed to a search for prospective officers. Farmers rated "low average" on them, while officers of the engineering corps, with just such a background as the tests would favor, rated highest with a classification of "very superior intelligence," an inevitable conclusion. Moreover, probably the less efficient farmers and farm laborers took the test in disproportionate numbers, since most of the owners and tenants were exempted from the draft in order to raise food.

School paces. There have been numerous studies for both scientific and practical purposes of retardation and acceleration among school children which show that there is somewhat more retardation in rural than in urban schools. This, however, contributes little or nothing to solving the problem of differences in rural and urban intelligence. It simply shows that the conditions well known to be handicapping many rural schools, such as lower average attendance chargeable to weather, short terms, ungraded classes, poorly trained teachers, and other things described in Chapter XVII, tend to retard rural pupils.

Achievement scores. For the reasons mentioned above, grade achievement in rural schools usually lags behind that of the city in some of the traditional subjects by as much as a year and a year and a half. This has been proved by numerous studies, but again it casts no reflection on rural intelligence *per se*. Progress made even in numerous one-room schools under the best conditions and methods; gains of two or three years in a single school year, as shown in Chapter XVII, are sufficient reproof to those who blame rural intelligence rather than inferior schools for retardation.

It may be granted that rural and especially farm children take from one third of a year to a year longer to finish the first eight grades. But the census figures on school attendance show that rural boys and girls stay in school longer than those in the city.¹ At least up to 1929, as Sorokin and Zimmerman indicate, the farm population of the United States, despite its larger proportion of children, had a higher ratio of high-school students, especially seniors, than the city.²

The net result of this discussion is not meant to indicate that rural children are more intelligent than urban, but that accepted measurements of intelligence by achievement tests underrate the average mental ability of the rural and especially the farm children, and that, therefore, to conclude from these tests that rural children are innately inferior to urban is wholly unwarranted, especially in view of the proven equality between rural and urban children of pre-school age.

Mental illnesses. Many pages on this subject have been written dealing with the incidence of insanity and feeble-mindedness in the rural and urban populations, and for that reason the subject is mentioned here. The crude data indicate

¹ Cf. Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, pp. 338-39. It is possible that this is no longer true, since the depression has greatly increased urban high school enrollment, while, in general, between 1920 and 1930, the city in this respect made more progress than the country.

² *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, pp. 244-46. New York, 1929. In some states the figures are quite striking: cf. W. F. Book, *Intelligence of High School Seniors*, which showed that in Indiana, where farm families composed 33 per cent of the state population, they furnished 37 per cent of the high-school seniors, whereas laborers, comprising 24 per cent of the total population, contributed only 9 per cent.

far less such illness in rural than in urban areas, but even so, the data are contradictory and are not sufficiently precise to warrant generalizations. For example, among draftees rejected for military service by the army during the World War, mental deficiency accounts for 1.5 per cent of all rejections among the urban men but 3.9 per cent among the rural.

It should be remembered, however, that while the cause of rejection was entered as a single item, actually more than one cause may have operated. Flat feet or fallen arches also disqualify for military service and are easily detectable. This is a difficulty far more common among urban than among rural people. No one knows how many men rejected for flat feet as a result of the initial physical examination may have also had some "mental defectiveness." There is no data regarding the incidence of mental illness after enlistment. Several medical officers have stated to the authors, on the basis of observation only, that rural men endured the agonizing stress of overseas service better than their city brethren.

Again, the census of *Feeble-minded and Epileptics in Institutions* inclines toward the conclusion that mental deficiency is more common in cities than in the country. The rate of first admissions of such patients to institutions was about 85 per 100,000 population in the city and 40 to 45 in the country, according to recent censuses. Moreover, the more rural a region, the lower the rate. But these data must be considered in the light of the fact that rural people seem to be less likely than urban to seek institutional care for the less difficult cases of mental disorder, and that in many states, especially some of the more rural ones, institutional facilities for the mentally disabled are wholly inadequate for the demand made upon them, and therefore many are robbed of such care.

The testimony of Who's Who. In the last ten or fifteen years a number of investigators have studied the biographies of distinguished Americans as presented in *Who's Who in America* to determine whether the rural areas are producing their share of eminent figures.¹ The conclusion has been that the city has

¹ Cf. especially, White, C. R., "The Cityward Drift of Population in Relation to

given birth to a disproportionate number of talented people — Visher, taking 1870 as the nearest census year to the birth of persons listed in *Who's Who* for 1922-23, found that cities, towns, and villages had 30 per cent of the population but contributed 74.1 per cent of the celebrities. The rest were born on farms.

This fact is interesting and valuable as far as it goes, but it contributes little to the problem of separating urban and rural intelligence. *Who's Who* inevitably selects those whose type of achievement puts them in the public eye, and perhaps specifically the eye of the urban public. For example, a Middle-Western farmer who developed a new, highly valuable and much used variety of corn, who has been an officer of one of the largest state farmers' organizations, and is now prominent in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in his state, is not listed in *Who's Who*. Many similar examples could be produced from a perusal of *RUS* — the rural *Who's Who*.¹ It seems safe to conclude with the eminent psychologist, Professor E. L. Thorndike, "That cities give birth to an undue proportion of great men does not in the least prove that city life made them great; it may prove that cities attract and retain great men, whose sons are thus city born."²

The whole problem of innate mental capacity, as we have attempted to suggest, is shrouded in mist. Trustworthy evidence has not yet been produced to prove that rural and urban people have marked differences of cerebral ability; where such differences ostensibly appear they can be traced to environmental and particularly to occupational sources, to acquired rather than inherited attitudes and thought-patterns.

— If this be true, it is time to turn to the second phase of our problem, and seek to discover in what respect, despite the cy-

Social Efficiency," *Journal of Social Forces*, November, 1923; Visher, S. S., "A Study of the Place of Birth and of the Occupation of Fathers of Subjects of Sketches in 'Who's Who in America,'" *American Journal of Sociology*, March, 1925; and Cattell, J. McK., "The Distribution of American Men of Science," *Science*, vol. xxiv, pp. 658-65, 699-707, 732-42; vol. xxxii, pp. 633-48.

¹ Compiled by L. H. and E. Z. Bailey. Ithaca, New York, 1930.

² *The Bookman*, vol. xxiv, p. 290.

clopean forces for standardization and equalization in America, rural and urban people differ, and deduce the social significances of such variations. Precise terminology cannot be used in such a discussion, for social psychology is in its infancy, and group measuring tools have not been forged.

TRAITS OF RURAL PEOPLE

At the outset it must be recognized that an analysis of rural traits is difficult not only because of the paucity of reliable studies in the field, but also because in few other realms is generalization in terms of all rural people more dangerous. The experience of the truck farmer of the Eastern States, in frequent and often daily contact with storekeepers, middlemen and commission merchants, who transports his perishable produce daily by automobile, who operates his acres on the basis of intensive cultivation, is quite different from that of the wheat-grower, whose single, non-perishable crop comes slowly to maturity, who handles it by machine and not by hand, who sells it in one or at most a few transactions, ships it by railroad, and rarely comes into frequent contact with the whole machinery of marketing. Both of these persons have widely different experiences from the Southern Highlander, coaxing a precarious existence from the rocky hillside, consuming much of what he raises and selling little, whose contacts with the "outside" are few and far between. The attitudes and many of the traits of these types would vary almost as much as their economic experiences; yet all are farmers.

The investigator who knew only the last type might announce that farmers are highly individualistic, and in terms of his experience, he would be correct. The investigator whose experience was limited to the citrus-fruit growers of Southern California would, on the other hand, conclude that farmers were highly co-operative.

In any study of rural attitudes or traits, case histories must be considered. The farmer who declared in 1924, when asked to join a flourishing co-operative, "I'll be blanked if anybody's

going to tell me when to sell my berries," was voicing the virile individualism that had characterized his forbears for three centuries in their struggle against the wilderness and the sea. The same man when he capitulated to the co-operative in 1934 had changed none of his innate, inherited characteristics. He was simply bowing to experience. Certainly part of the equipment of the rural sociologist, teacher or social servant should be to understand the motives and histories of the traditions and attitudes he seeks to change.

Effects of different types of farming. It is possible to trace from the behavior of groups of farmers over periods of years changes in attitude, at least in regard to agriculture itself. The traditional American farm was once as self-sufficient as it could be made, but now, in many parts of the country, a single money crop is the main objective. This change has produced psychological attitudes largely unknown before. It has converted the farmer into something of a speculator and mercantilist, an attitude which sometimes begins to color other types of behavior. Diversification of money crops in turn brings other experiences and traits. It is possible that types of agriculture are related to the temperamental qualities in the devotees they attract.¹

Influence of weather. There is also a possible relation between weather or climate, which plays so large a part in agricultural life, and the temperament or philosophy of the peasantry. Perhaps this is one reason why the peasants of such countries as China and India are so fatalistic in some of their attitudes. Again, agrarian life, linked so closely to the primal mysteries of nature, of wind and weather, sky-changes and earth-changes, tends to bring out man's primordial instincts, his superstitiousness and leanings toward the supernatural. Perhaps that is why in some regions of the United States rural people are more religious and orthodox than city dwellers. It may also explain the lack of enthusiasm which the less informed farmer often evinces for scientific methods: he knows

¹ Cf. Williams, J. M., *The Expansion of Rural Life*, chap. XIII. Knopf, New York, 1926.

that capricious nature too frequently upsets the best-laid plans of men.

Co-operative attitudes. The American farmer has often been described as highly individualistic; yet now, as will be shown in Chapter XV, a majority of the commercial farmers are members of co-operatives and between two fifths and one half of all farm products sold are marketed co-operatively. If such a record had been achieved by industry perhaps the "co-operative commonwealth" and the "new social order" of some of our social prophets would be nearer than they seem. The great progress of agricultural co-operation since 1915 certainly represents a marked change in attitude, a process in which it is possible to detect some of the formative elements. There was originally resentment against middlemen and processors, a tendency to unite against their menace, a growing understanding of the weaknesses of the old marketing procedures. Then came organization and education by the leaders to stir the great mass of unaroused farmers. Time was given, though sometimes not enough, to effect necessary modifications in the old, stubbornly persisting individualism. But the sense of need for collective action grew. Those with common interests, such as citrus-fruit, apple, milk, and butter producers, were the first to capitulate; and the success of these and of the movements toward combination among employers and laboring men in industry accelerated the general co-operative movement, which, although it still leaves much to be desired, is an excellent illustration of how attitudes are changed and how the alleged rural resistance to change was overcome by rural people themselves, frequently against outside opposition.

Religious attitudes. There appear to be certain distinctive rural religious attitudes, such as the orthodoxy just alluded to, though again generalization is dangerous. While rural church members are doubtless more orthodox than urban, this probably holds true only within certain regions. Judging by indirect evidence only, the rural people of the Pacific Coast, and more certainly of New England, are further from the tradi-

tional beliefs and interpretations of Christian Scripture than is true, for instance, in the urban South.

Rural religion is also more puritanical than urban, at least in many denominations, an evidence of which is to be found in the divorce statistics issued by the Census Bureau. The proportion of those enumerated as divorced people in rural America, as pointed out earlier, is about one half that in the cities, and probably is actually less than that because a smaller number of rural divorcees apparently remarry. Perhaps one reason for this is the fact that the farm is an economic as well as a family unit, but the necessities of this arrangement have been rationalized on religious grounds.

The Methodist prohibitions against dancing, theater-going, and card-playing became dead letters in the city churches long before the denomination as a whole allowed the issue to be settled on the basis of principle and the conscience of the individual. The old-fashioned evangelistic or revival campaign, while declining even in its stronghold, the South, began to lose popularity and efficacy in the city before it did in the country, and is still stronger in rural areas than elsewhere. Possibly, therefore, rural religion and even rural people are more emotional than others. There is some evidence that the individualism attributed to rural people, because of their relatively greater degree of isolation, has made rural religion more clannish in its denominational allegiances. Certainly councils of churches arose in cities before they did in states, and in the more urban states, or those whose religious administration was controlled by urban agencies, before the others. This, however, may have been a matter of a greater need for co-operation since, as shown in Chapter XIX, the majority of local church co-operative experiments are rural in origin and location.

Changing social attitudes. This text has already given evidence and will give more, of changing social attitudes. Thus the growing co-operation of farmer and villager and the increasing importance of the village and town as the center of the twentieth-century rural community, described in Chap-

ter V, are evidences that the old antagonistic attitudes between these groups are passing. With growing acquaintanceship and mutual experiences these are being replaced more and more by co-operation. Moreover, social attitudes have been changed in other particulars, notably in education. Once school work always gave way to farm work if the children were needed at home. Today this is the exception, not the rule. Similarly the changes in social organization described in Chapter XXI indicate changing attitudes and fashions as to the objectives of organized social life.

In January, 1931, *Farm and Fireside* published the results of an "opinion questionnaire" sent to its readers. Replies were received from 13,431 persons living in all parts of the country, of an average age of slightly less than 40 years, of whom 70 per cent live on farms, 28 per cent in small towns, and 2 per cent in cities. Answers to a few of the questions reveal the extent of rural acceptance or rejection of urbanizing influences. Among the summaries published are the following:

Twenty per cent of those replying would "welcome large-scale corporate farming," while the other 80 per cent believe the "family farm" is a "sounder proposition."

Eighty-one per cent were opposed to any steps which would make "divorce easier to obtain."

Seventy-two per cent said that farm magazines should not publish cigarette advertising.

Sixty-seven per cent would favor legislation permitting "doctors to impart birth control methods to married couples who apply jointly."

Farm and Fireside regards the vote on birth control as the "most astonishing departure" from older standards. It believes there are economic and technical factors which have produced a change of opinion. The increasing mechanization of agriculture means that the labor of children is not used as extensively as before. It is also thought by some observers that changing living standards may be bringing about a "competition between children and other expenditures," already evident for some time in urban families.

Replies to a question which asked (of rural people) for "the thought that most needs to be emphasized throughout America at this time" reveal a significant difference "between the generations." Those over thirty seem to show much more concern about religion and conventional moral standards. Taking the group as a whole, however, 37 per cent say, in substance, "Hold fast to God and the old moralities." As to where chief emphasis should be placed, 85 per cent were distributed among such matters as law enforcement, better schools or roads, standards of citizenship, world peace, child training, improved human relations or "a closer spiritual relationship with God."

A subsequent check-up more than two years later, in which the same issues were presented in story form and the readers were asked to pass judgment, showed a further swing to more liberal attitudes.

Rural-urban comparisons. Differences in rural-urban social attitudes have already been extensively noted. We shall now advance some hypotheses which may account for the psychological and empirical separation between the two groups.

To begin with, the city resident has a broader range of experience than the country man. He sees more people, is thrown into more situations, and exposed to a far greater number of environmental action-patterns which leave their mark on his reflexes and habits. Consider the amount of transportation he endures — subways, buses, trolleys, automobiles; he has greater access to information and knowledge through libraries, lectures, museums, theaters, concert halls, art galleries, and the like. On the other hand, his direct, occupational experience is more limited than that of the farmer or villager. He is confined, perhaps, to one or a few mechanical operations, to a counter in a store, a desk in an office.

Thus, rural people may have fewer non-occupational or worldly experiences, and therefore a narrower basis for judging them. On the other hand, their wider range of occupational activities might make them more eager for facts, more resistant to superficial theories or propaganda. Moreover, the out-

door nature of their work makes the farmer, and to some extent the villager, sterner, more virile, persevering, and patient than those in many urban occupations.

These hypotheses could be illustrated with case histories, but even illustrations must be used with discretion and in terms of the background and experiences of particular groups. It is evident, however, that the lives of rural people, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, are more and more bending to a common national force.

Rural people have been put into instant touch with the stream of world events. Isolation has been almost eliminated. Some rooted habits have been changed, others acquired especially in villages; as for example, the remodeling of old one-family houses into apartments, and the appearance of rural beauty parlors, unknown before 1925. Sales of labor-saving devices have multiplied; seasonal comestibles, for example, are now carried all the year round in many rural stores.

Some observers proclaim that rural life, especially village life, is being completely urbanized. This is true only to a certain extent. In the superficialities of life, such as dress, and other matters earlier enumerated, urban fashions set the pace in rural communities; in more intangible matters, morals, ideals and religion, such a conclusion cannot yet be accepted.

There are certain matters, however, in which rural and urban may never merge. Take as an illustration the simple matter of smoking by women. A questionnaire considered by over ten thousand rural leaders showed that very few small-town women were using tobacco, and although more than half felt that its use was slowly increasing, the replies sharply delimited the type of woman who so indulged herself to "those who have been away at school," "those who always ape the city," and so on. Even in the East, where more smoking was reported, it was frequently declared to be a passing fad. Less than 10 per cent of rural high-school girls appeared to be smokers. In the 140 villages several public health nurses and teachers were reported to have lost their jobs for using tobacco.

A Middle-Western teachers' college that questioned 240 school superintendents in its state found that 220 refused to appoint a teacher who smoked. It is hardly possible that any city superintendent would feel this way. No wonder, then, that several magazines designed especially for rural women continue to reject thousands of dollars of cigarette advertising each year.

Differences exist and will continue. The country is zealous of its identity, and although it bends before exterior cultural forces, it always does so reluctantly. It is doubtful, indeed, if country and city, urban and rural, will ever be so completely leveled as to lose their group identities, even in the face of the annihilation of space, time, and castes. In the questionnaire alluded to, the suggestion that rural people were blindly accepting urban habits met with a storm of protest. Ruralites felt that those who believed this had "a very limited understanding of rural America," or were "unable or too provincial to conceive of the advanced conditions of the average village."¹

From education to luncheon clubs, rural America insists on fashioning urban social devices to its own taste. That apostle of urban superiority, Carol Kennicott, seems to be no more popular on any Main Street than she was in Sinclair Lewis's *Gopher Prairie*, but, like *Gopher Prairie*, the average village seems to be improving itself in its own way.

The conclusion of the matter seems to be that so far as evidence exists, the psychological traits of rural people are not inherited but molded and perhaps created by their experiences. Rural psychology is distinctive in great measure from urban, despite a great leveling force at present operating in our country; it differs from region to region, from community to community. Yet there is a good deal of similarity between city and country: people move from one to the other with ease and adjust themselves without undue disturbance. The basic human qualities are doubtless practically the same wherever folk live, move and have their being.

¹ Cf. a survey in 1930 of *The Small-Town Woman's Reactions to Urban Customs*, by a class in Sociology at Teachers College, Columbia University. Chicago, Colonial Press, 1930.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Summarize the psychological characteristics which Sorokin and Zimmerman attribute to rural people.
2. Discuss these characteristics in terms of your community presenting evidence for or against the conclusions of Sorokin and Zimmerman.
3. Write either the affirmative or negative brief for a debate on the question: "Resolved — that city people are more intelligent than rural."
4. Trace evidences of urbanization (or ruralization) of attitudes you have observed in your community.
5. Report any of the results of any studies made by the Department of Psychology in your institution on the comparative intelligence or achievement of urban and rural school children.
6. Account for any changes in the attitudes of your community on one or more specific issues, paying special attention to the influences of communication.
7. Examine a rural population group (*a*) as to ancestry; (*b*) as to the demonstrable persistence of ancestral ideas.

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CHAPTER XII

RURAL YOUTH ¹

THE preceding chapters have dealt with rural population, its mobility, composition, and characteristics in general. There is one special age group in the rural population which, because of the depression difficulties of the 1930's, demands special attention. It is the group to which this book is dedicated, Rural Youth.

About 1940 the United States entered a half-decade when the number of youth, 16 to 24 years of age, in the population will be at the maximum, about 22,000,000 in all. Nearly half of these in 1940 dwell in rural areas. In the hands of this group, rural and urban, lies the United States of tomorrow.

Youth are migratory. Youth is the period of migration, as Chapter IX showed. Between 1920 and 1930 about 2,000,000 persons 15 to 24 years of age migrated to the cities from farms. This represents one third of the total net migration, though in 1930 this age group made up slightly less than one fifth of the total rural farm population. No data exist on the urban movement of the village youth, but probably at least another million persons were involved. With urban birth rates as they are, the present levels of population in almost all of the cities of America cannot be sustained without this renewal of their human resources from the farms and villages.

The extent of this migration, its destination, and the proportions coming from farm and non-farm localities vary with the region. So, too, does the number and proportion of rural farm and non-farm youth. In the main these variations follow the patterns of the general population. In the more industrialized areas, such as the Northeast and Pacific, non-farm

¹ This chapter summarizes the situation of rural youth, but a number of other chapters deal with the problems and conditions of youth as they relate to the topics of these chapters.

youth form a majority of rural youth and their problems show greater divergencies from those of farm youth than elsewhere. In other regions similarities are far closer.

One important element in the situation is the Negro. About 1,500,000 of the rural youth are of this race. Serious as have been the problems of the 1930's for all this age group, they have weighed more heavily on the Negroes than on the whites because of the relatively disadvantaged position of the former race.

Depression reduced migration. As Chapter IX shows, the lack of economic opportunity in the cities sharply reduced the migration of farm people to cities. This was especially true of youth. Melvin estimates that as a result the number of rural youth on farms increased by almost one million, or 18.3 per cent between 1930 and 1935.¹ This rate of increase is 2.2 points above the national rate of population growth for the entire decade of 1920-30 and nearly five times the rate of increase for the nation as a whole in the period 1930-35 as estimated by the Bureau of the Census in December, 1938. The increase in rural non-farm youth Melvin estimates at 181,000, or 4.9 per cent. Obviously there has been a piling-up of rural youth, especially on the farms. Another measure of this is Melvin's estimate ² that the net migration of youth from the farms in the period 1930-34 was slightly less than 200,000, or at about one fifth the rate of the 1920's. Even though the rate of migration has accelerated since 1935, Melvin estimates that there will be over a million more youth in rural areas in 1940 than in 1930.

Economic opportunities for rural youth meager. This "piling-up" of youth in rural areas has increased the number of persons seeking work at a time when job opportunities were fewer than average. The number of farms becoming available each year through the death or retirement of their operators is far below the number of youth who could find a career or an

¹ Melvin, B. L., *Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects*, p. 12. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1938.

² *Ibid.*

economic outlet in agriculture. For the nation as a whole the replacement rate of males 18 to 65 years of age by males of 18 years in the farm population was 2.4 in 1930. Roughly speaking, this means that two and one half times as many farm youth reach 18 years as persons 18 to 64 die or retire.¹

In the villages, the total number of industrial jobs seems to have increased 9.8 per cent between 1930 and 1936 as against an estimated gain of 10.2 per cent in the total population of the community. However, only 47 per cent of these were full-time jobs in 1936 as against 76 per cent in 1930; the number of full-time positions declined by one third.² It is small wonder, then, that in 1936 two fifths of the high-school graduates of 1935 in the 140 village-centered farming communities were found to be unemployed and that these were probably not more than one half the unemployed youth in these communities.

While many youth, especially those with college education, were most resourceful in finding opportunities for themselves, especially in trade, as Chapter XXI shows, many others of those employed were engaged in "blind-alley" jobs or in work that bore little relation to their interests or abilities.

In the main the farm youth seem to have more employment than the rural-non-farm. An extensive study in Wisconsin in 1934 showed half the village out-of-school youth under 20 years of age unemployed as against less than one sixth on the farm. For those 20 to 25, one fourth of the village, one seventh of the farm men were unemployed. On the other hand, the proportion of farm youth in C.C.C. camps was higher than for rural-non-farm youth.³

In many cases the "employment" was on the home farm, the youth having taken the place of the hired man or the domestic help. Again and again in a number of surveys it was

¹ Melvin, B. L., *Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects*, pp. 12-13. There is an eightfold variation among the regions in this respect. The ratio is 3.2 in the South Atlantic States, 0.4 in New England.

² Cf. Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 66, 71, 117-120. Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.

³ James, J. J., and Kolb, J. H., *Wisconsin Rural Youth*. Madison, Wisconsin, 1936.

stated that this procedure, by saving the wages involved, had made the difference between failure and keeping the farm in the family. Under such conditions, of course, the return to youth for their labor was meager, often nothing more than board, room, clothes, and occasionally pocket money. In New York only 14 per cent of the boys regularly working for their fathers had definite agreements with them as to compensation. Unfortunate as such a situation is, the fact that rural youth stepped into the breach, at a time of great difficulty in agriculture and on their home farms, is evidence of the solidarity of the farm family, indicated in Chapter XVI.

The November, 1937, Federal Census of total and partial unemployment confirmed the situation outlined above. On the basis of inquiries along 70 per cent of the rural mail routes it was found that one fourth of the youth were employed and that more than one half were not available for employment, presumably because of being in school or college or at work on the home farm. On the other hand, one eighth were unemployed and seeking work and half as many had part-time or emergency work. It should be noted that this census was taken after the harvest and after the peak of the vegetable and fruit canning season. In villages and towns up to 10,000 population, the proportions were about the same, though in large places there was a bit more unemployment.

Moreover, rural youth generally realized the seriousness of the situation and were not disposed to refuse to work even if the work were not to their liking. "Anything to make a living," was a frequent answer to questions as to what they wished to do.¹ Despite this fact, the vocational interests and choices of rural youth are far broader than they were fifteen years ago as Chapter XVIII showed.

In seeking work, of course, rural youth faced the handicaps of the total unemployment situation in the United States in the 1930's. Low rates of industrial activity combined with steady advances in technology in the cities, increase in mecha-

¹ Lister, J. J., and Kirkpatrick, E. L., *Rural Youth Speak*. American Youth Commission, Washington, D.C., 1939.

nization on the farms, declining opportunities in rural industrial areas, increased competition for such farms as became available for tenants, all combined to make the situation difficult.

Even when employed, the wages received were not large. Median weekly compensation for males living on farms was \$8.51, for females \$8.17, according to the Maryland Youth Survey.¹ For village youth the comparable figures were, respectively, \$14.37 and \$11.54. Over 2700 youths, two thirds of them males, were included in this sample.

In the New York studies² the earnings of unmarried youth were \$13 for each sex. Married village youth received \$20; farm youth \$16 a week.

Government programs some help to youth. Facts like these raise the question as to how heavily rural youth were forced to depend on relief or other emergency rural programs. Melvin estimates that since 1930 "not less than two million rural youth have been members of relief households." This amounts to about one fifth of all rural youth. The peak seems to have been in February, 1935, when 14 per cent of all rural youth, 1,370,000, were receiving aid. By October of the same year the number had declined more than one half to 625,000. Taking into account the rural enrollment in the C.C.C. camps, about half the total, youth aid by N.Y.A. grants — about 6 per cent of the high-school enrollment in the 140 communities — and youth in families aided by the Farm Security Administration, it is probable that about one tenth of all rural youth are benefiting to some degree from some type of federal assistance.³

Characteristics of rural youth relief population. Youth from 16 to 19 years of age had a slightly disproportionate representation of the relief rolls as compared with the 20- to 24-year-old group. In the South, white youth, comprising about

¹ Lister, J. J., and Kirkpatrick, E. L., *Rural Youth Speak*. American Youth Commission, Washington, D.C., 1939.

² Five in all, published by the College of Agriculture, Cornell, from 1933 to 1936. Bulletins 560, 617, 631, 649, 661.

³ Melvin, B. L., *Rural Youth on Relief*. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1937.

73 per cent of the total youth group, were about 83 per cent of the youth relief group. This may indicate discrimination against Negroes. The proportion married, one fifth of the males and two fifths of the females, was only slightly above the proportion of all rural youth, though in the 22- to 24-year-old group the proportion married was sharply in excess of the ratio for the total population in these years — about 4 per cent above for the males and 12 per cent for the females. Even so, according to the Maryland Youth Survey¹ about one fifth of the boys and two fifths of the girls reported the postponement of marriage largely because of economic conditions. As would be expected, significantly fewer of the relief youth were in school than of their more fortunate neighbors. In some age groups the differences were as high as 40 per cent, though they averaged about half this figure. The relief youth had completed also on the average about one and one half grades less than the median for completed grades by equivalent years.² Clearly it is the disadvantaged or the less able youth who needed assistance, except in some of the areas where the drought or similar uncontrollable calamities had made the situation worse than would otherwise have been the case.

Youth's morale still high. Despite the situation sketched in the preceding pages, the morale of rural youth remains, in the average, high. In the Maryland Youth Survey two fifths of the village youth and slightly higher proportion of the farm youth felt that there was no "youth problem."³ Less than one fourth of the city youth agreed with them. The fact that Maryland came through the depression somewhat better than the farther South and Middle West may in part account for this, or possibly urban youth have a greater awareness of the problems they face. However, in the main, in the 140 village-centered farm communities, despite individual exceptions in almost every community and some exceptions in terms of whole localities, youth seemed to be making the best of the situation, especially if there was some work available. The spirit and attitude, as judged by and reported to field workers,

¹ *Op. cit.* Derived from Table 11, p. 20.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Op. cit.*

was good. But it was equally true that individuals everywhere, and whole groups in some places, were becoming discouraged, fatalistic, bitter, cynical.

Nonetheless, 19 out of 20 rural youth in Maryland felt that relief was a governmental responsibility, and almost as many believed that this relief should be on a level adequate for health and decency, but on a work basis. Very few, indeed, approve the dole. In this connection, it is interesting to note that more than three fifths of the white farm boys and almost one half of the girls, 22 to 24 years of age, voted at their last opportunity to do so. Among the Negroes the proportions were 77 and 72 per cent respectively.¹

Leisure-time uses. What young people do with their leisure time depends in part on their initiative and in part on the availability of desired recreational or educational opportunities. Leisure activities are also both in groups or organizations and individual. There are sharp variations in the popularity and availability of possible activities as among the many groups surveyed. In the main, reading is the most frequent and one of the most popular. In Wisconsin, attending movies, listening to the radio, playing cards, sports, and dancing followed in order. In specific communities, however, the presence of a well-organized and successful activity in the realms of drama or music, for instance, sharply changes both the preferences of and the expenditure of time by youth.

Another difference related in part to organization is that involved in sports and athletic activities. In well-organized areas these interests rank high. Elsewhere outdoor leisure activities tend to be more individual in character, such as hunting and trapping.

Organizational meetings and activities are a frequent outlet for leisure time, and here, too, differences are great. For instance, in the New York studies,² almost nine tenths of the young women and two thirds of the young men belonged to church. In the Maryland Youth Survey,³ only about one half belonged. In New York, almost half the youth belonged to

¹ Lister and Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*

² *Op. cit.*

³ *Op. cit.*

one young people's group and about one fifth to the Grange. In Maryland, six sevenths of the farm youth did not belong to any organization unconnected with the church.

In the main, it appears that, while in the aggregate many organizations court rural youth, rural youth do not have an undue number of organizational contacts. Indeed, youth are not interested in some organizations because their programs are too readymade or standardized, too much dominated by older persons. Moreover, informal groupings have real value at that age.

Youth knows what it wants. Regardless of the opinion of youth as to whether or not it faced peculiar problems in the present situation, youth knows what it wants. With surprising unanimity various surveys, both published and unpublished, put four things to the fore:

1. Jobs — economic security.
2. More education.
3. Better opportunities for an adequate social life.
4. Opportunity for, and information as to how, under present conditions, marriage can be entered into and homes established.

The first of these in the light of the history of the 1930's is wholly understandable and the most difficult of achievement. The desire for more education was frequently qualified by criticism of the education already received. As one young man put it, "More, but none of the same." All over the nation youth seemed to feel that the schooling they had had was weak, or too narrow, on the vocational side, that it had failed to help them fit into or understand the conditions they had to face on leaving school, and that it fell far short of helping them meet the personal problems of adjustment. These criticisms are significant in relation to the curriculum trends described in Chapter XVIII.

Finally, rural youth had become quite conscious of the lack of adequate social organization; of the fact that they left behind on graduation from high school or college a rather full and interesting extra-curricular life and emerged into communities

where social life was organized for and controlled by older adults whose interests and activities were significantly different from their own. This critique raises the question as to what, if any, remedial steps are being taken by youth, their communities or national agencies.

Communities baffled. On the community level there was considerable concern about youth in half of the 140 localities, but local leaders felt that the best they could do was of a stop-gap nature. Some centers had added post-graduate courses in high schools. In other places, the W.P.A. "emergency" adult education program, described in Chapter XIX, and the recreational activities, noted in Chapter XXII, were being utilized for building something of a program for out-of-school youth. In two cases service and other adult clubs had united with the schools in a more thoroughgoing program which in one of these cases involved N.Y.A. aid for 100 high-school students and for 16 graduates in college, employment of 50 youth on a near-by Resettlement project, placing others in C.C.C. camps, employment of some in local businesses "at whatever wage the proprietor could afford," and the successful demand on urban concerns with which local merchants did business for some positions for local youth.

Youth solves some of its own problems. In many places all over the nation, youth were getting together at least to solve the problem of social organization. Typical of the better of these efforts is a club in a Middle West State started, as many were, by young college graduates forced by the depression to remain in their home community.

In November, 1933, an article on rural recreation in the county paper brought one of the group to the County Agent. As a result, a small group went to a three-day recreational institute for rural leaders conducted by the Agricultural Extension Service. Forthwith, they started a club, Country Youth, in their home township, beginning with fourteen members. The first year's activities began with a highly successful play, which built both morale and community approval. Forty-five other events or activities were embarked on in the first

year, including the building of a tennis court, horseshoe-pitching tournaments, soft ball, programs at the various schools, suppers, basketball, and a country-wide drama festival. Other things, insignificant as such, helped. A broken victrola was repaired by one of the members and placed in the Farm Bureau Hall. Selling of ice cream and soft drinks at summer gatherings brought enough money to purchase and install a piano in the same hall.

In the following years the program broadened with parties, excursions, summer picnics, and the giving of programs before various community organizations, about forty a year. Community service units were formed in connection with two thirds of the county schools. Dances were included and participation in a number of state youth activities. Money was spent to secure lecturers on topics in which the members were interested.

The membership of Country Youth is county-wide. In its five years it has grown from 14 to 345. All of the thirteen townships in the county are represented, but six of them have three fourths of the total.

This group is significant. It has earned its way despite an ever-broadening program. Its service program is quite effective. It has deepened interest and increased participation in drama and music all over the county. It has revived the spirit of recreation and extended the meaning of education. It has convinced the farm youth that they can achieve. Interestingly enough, twelve of the fourteen charter members are still in their home county, eleven on farms.¹

In another county a youth group, working under the sponsorship of an adult committee, by use of a self-survey, attempted to find out what rural young people between the ages of 15 and 28 think about present conditions and what they think can and should be done. Within 15 months after the survey was completed, a number of different moves were made to meet the needs of young people in the county as revealed by the study. A County Youth Committee was formed; a county-wide youth conference was held, focusing attention on the

¹ Todd, Kirby. *Country Youth*. Unpublished paper.

findings of the survey. A summer young people's camp was held; a folk school and camp was set up and carried on for three months; some new organizations for young people were started in areas where there were none; a series of meetings was held over the county by young people themselves in an attempt to get part-time schools, classes, and recreational programs set up in local community centers. Some of the young people were encouraged to continue their formal education. Other counties, seeing the success of such effort, undertook similar surveys.

Another interesting development, antedating the depression, is a national rural youth conference held at the same time as the annual conference of the American Country Life Association. It has been sponsored largely by collegiate country life clubs. In some regions state conferences have been held that are proving quite influential in helping youth to help themselves and their communities.

State and national agencies also help. The vocational teachers in the rural high schools have expanded their part-time work and some fifty thousand boys who have or hope to have farm opportunities at home or as tenants are receiving training, usually weekly during the winter and monthly for the rest of the year. Some part of the two- to three-hour sessions is devoted to recreation. Similarly, about as many young women are learning home management, personality improvement, interior decoration, consumer education, uses of leisure time, and there is a growing emphasis on family relationships, child development, and consumer education.

Agricultural Extension is also developing an older youth program, reaching about seventy thousand rural farm youth. It may be compared to "a graduate 4-H program." Community service, discussion sessions, recreation and social development, and individual projects comprise the bulk of this program. There is considerable emphasis on leadership training, and conferences, institutes, and camps are being held on district or state bases.

The federal emergency programs have played their part, as

is clear both from the previous discussion and from other chapters where the work of some of these agencies is described and evaluated. Some colleges in rural areas are experimenting with self-help plans to enable rural youth to continue their program.

Adapting the folk-school idea. For rural youth preparing to live their lives on farms, much of traditional education falls short of meeting their needs. In times of rapid social and economic adjustment, a new type of rural citizenship and leadership is required. The informal and dynamic emphasis found chiefly in the folk-school plan of adult education has possibilities which should be explored. The genius of the Danes was shown when they created a new educational spirit and technique to meet a disastrous economic and cultural depression. Their approach was essentially democratic. In the classroom the emphasis was upon the "living word" or the inspired lecture, while friendly conversation characterized the life about the school and in the homes of teachers. There were no entrance requirements, examinations, or diplomas. The value of vocational subjects was recognized, especially when taught in their social setting, but the folk-school leaders concentrated on the so-called humanities: social science, liberal arts, literature, and above all, history.

While the outward form of the folk school has not seemed to thrive in the American and Anglo-Saxon environment, and while any attempt to transplant its mechanics of books, buildings, or curriculum would be foolish indeed, yet there is an increased interest on the part of educators and thoughtful people in the substance and spirit of this kind of education. When so many problems face modern society, social as well as technical in nature, here may be an idea worth adapting in order to help develop a new educational interest and enthusiasm on the part of older rural youth or, for that matter, urban youth, as well as to create a new sense of citizenship, commensurate with the problems with which they are faced.

One effort, among others, at this kind of adapting and exploring is now in progress at the University of Wisconsin. An

agricultural short course of long standing, with a typical emphasis on technical and vocational subjects, was reorganized in 1932 to include the social and economic fields of agriculture, as well as the cultural phases of rural living. The four-month winter course is for young men in their early twenties, living on farms. There are no academic requirements, although a majority have completed high school. The plan of courses is built around the social and cultural needs, as well as the vocational and technical needs of these young men. In fact, the very essence of this venture is the attempt at synchronizing these two educational objectives. Therefore, in addition to practical training in the many features of scientific farming, time and place are found for history, economics, marketing, co-operation, sociology, public speaking and discussion, music, art, and literature. An important feature is the common life in dormitories and dining room, a feature which goes far in the personal, social, and cultural development of these rural youth. Another innovation with promise is the "evening forums." Two or three times each week throughout the period, stimulating personalities from on and off the campus, leaders not only in the field of agriculture, but also in industry, business, labor, education, government, art, literature, and music, are brought to the auditorium in the dormitory building to talk, but mostly to discuss, in forum fashion, important subjects of the day.

The response on the part of young farmers to this new type of educational opportunity has been very gratifying. During the past three winters the dormitory facilities have been taxed to capacity with about 350 young men, coming from every county in the state and from several neighboring states.

This experiment may be summed up in the words of its leader, the dean of the College of Agriculture: "We are trying to give the young men on Wisconsin farms a training which will fit them for active participation in the whole life of a democratic, highly interdependent community. We are trying to educate rural youth not to leave the country for the city, but to give their best to improving rural civilization, including now, as it does, (1) an awakened and enlightened farm popu-

lation, and (2) a rural leadership capable of manning the affairs of distribution as well as production." ¹

None of these activities will solve the basic economic problems. They may go far in improving the social situation of rural youth. Certainly two immediate steps need to be taken. One of these is the great improvement of vocational guidance and education in rural communities. The situation in this report is described in Chapter XVIII. The other is the establishment of an Occupational Outlook Service, as called for by the President's Advisory Committee on Education.² By assembling the data available from the Social Security Board, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other federal agencies, it will be easily possible to advise youth as to occupational opportunities in the various states and regions.

Summary. It is clear from this discussion and from facts presented elsewhere in this volume that one of the depression trends has been to accentuate the normal problems rural youth faces as it leaves school or college and sets about the business of acquiring a job and founding a family. Employment opportunities have been curtailed both in rural and urban America. Opportunities for constructive leisure-time activities are in many places inadequate. But the morale of youth is still high. Youth may be beset with problems, but youth is the nation's most valuable asset. This asset has been but little impaired as yet by the experiences of the 1930's. Increasingly rural youth know what they want and are beginning to move toward securing it. Out of the growing awareness of the nation as to the problems and with the help of youth, the needed solutions may arise. One of the difficulties in the whole matter is the economic condition of agriculture and it is to the social factors and meanings of that aspect of rural life that the discussion now turns.

¹ Dean C. L. Christensen, "Significance of the Folk-School Type of Adult Education," *American Co-operation*, 1938. Collection of papers comprising the Fourteenth Annual Session of the American Institute of Co-operation.

² Cf. The Committee's *Report*, pp. 104-107.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Should rural youth have separate organizations rather than join in existing community agencies? Defend your opinion.
2. What educational programs should be provided for out-of-school youth and under what auspices?
3. Is there a "youth problem" in your community? In what ways does it manifest itself? What is being done and what could be done to solve it? By the school? By the churches? By other agencies? By youth?
4. Should the Federal Government contract or extend its programs for aiding youth, such as the N.Y.A., the C.C.C., etc.? If contract, why? If expand, in what ways and how?
5. Should youth working at home have a regular stated wage? Defend your opinion.

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There have been to date between forty and fifty studies in terms of specific localities and states, by state colleges of agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture. In all, more than one half the states are represented. More are forthcoming.

PART III
RURAL SOCIETY: ITS MAJOR
OCCUPATION—AGRICULTURE

CHAPTER XIII

AGRICULTURE AND ITS PROBLEMS OF ADJUSTMENT

MEN's lives are greatly influenced by their means of livelihood, which affect and mould their social contacts, their personal habits, and condition, in the aggregate, community attitudes and social organization. The farmer mingles with farmers more than with other occupational groups. He joins a farmer's organization, not a labor union. He looks at issues from the point of view of their effect upon agriculture. For all these reasons, we must consider the social contributions of agriculture, and the social implications of the business of farming.

This and the two following chapters will be devoted to this theme. This chapter will sketch, in broad strokes, the socio-economic history of American agriculture, with special emphasis upon the last fifteen years. The following chapters will cover in more detail the social implications of the size and value of farms, land tenure, credit, taxation, and agricultural co-operation.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Early agriculture self-sufficient. In early American history agriculture was self-sufficient. The pioneer built his house out of the trees which he cleared from his land. He raised his own food, butchered his own meat, churned his own butter, made his own soap. His women folk converted the wool from his sheep into homespun clothes. He counted his wealth in acres, buildings, and live stock. He had little use for money. What goods he could not produce, such as coffee and sugar, he obtained by barter with the nearest storekeeper. Only cotton

and tobacco farmers exported their products for cash, and hence, for decades these people were closer to the current of world affairs than any other agrarian group. But specialization began. The farmer ceased grinding his own grain and took it to the miller, who converted it into flour for a cash consideration. He sold his wool and bought clothes in the store. A community creamery took the place of the household churn.

Changes began with the nineteenth century. With the startling technological changes of the nineteenth century, agriculture began to change rapidly. The railroad opened up the rich lands of the Middle West, and thither, as we have seen, the population streamed. Eastern cities grew and needed more food for their population. Western acres yielded abundant crops, and food was transported East at such low prices that it was impossible for the New England farmer to compete, since yields from his relatively inferior soil were too low, and production costs too high. The rural-urban migration (discussed earlier) was accelerated by these forces.

The West beckons. But the West beckoned always more seductively. Land was to be procured for little more than hard labor. Moreover, the young nation needed capital to build railways and factories — capital it was not producing as rapidly as required. Huge sums were imported from Europe and payment was made in rapidly multiplying bushels of grain and bales of cotton, coaxed from the soil by multiplying hordes of farmers. Every spike fastening rail to tie in the expanding web of railroads which were opening territory after territory, first to the plow and then to the world market, was a blow to general farming, not only in New England, but in Old England as well, where the agricultural population decreased from one third the total in 1815 to one tenth in 1860. America spread a bargain counter in food and fiber before world buyers. Frequently, production, growing by leaps and bounds, especially as agriculture began to abandon the hoe for the machine, outstripped consumption. Prices were then depressed, and out of such depression grew the Populist revolt and the Bryan demand for free silver in the 1896 Presidential campaign, and

such a national farmers' organization as the Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the Grange, still, incidentally, a powerful agency.

From 1860 to 1910 our farmers increased from 2,000,000 to 6,000,000, and from 1870 to the turn of the century our agricultural exports gained more than fourfold to \$1,250,000,000. By 1895 we were exporting about one half billion bushels of cereals, ten times the 1870 figure.

Transportation changes help expansion. The perfection of long-distance transport of non-perishable agricultural products and the establishment of an agricultural export trade are vital facts in American history. Farming thereby ceased to be largely a self-sufficing way of life, and became instead a business, acquiring something of the nature and spirit of capitalistic enterprise. Gradually it acquired, too, some of the techniques of capitalism. It learned to profit from co-operation and combination. It revised its commercial manners according to the best capitalistic standards. Its credit arrangements, especially as worked out in the Federal Land Banks, imitated corporation finance. But of these, more later.

Specialization changes social arrangements. This shift from a largely self-sufficing to a commercial type of agriculture completely revised the social arrangements of farming people. It involved some specialization, and therefore made the farmer more and more dependent on the rest of society for primary needs. The farmhouse became less and less self-contained; it dispensed with its butcher shop, creamery, soap factory, and tailoring establishment. Distribution of specialized crops, moreover, brought the farmer into contact with world markets. Developments of communication widened not only mental horizons but community boundaries as well. Schools, churches, and other social organizations responded in varying degree to an expanding world. In the tangled web of forces which changed the farmer's principal market from his own home to the world, and the center of his world from the neighborhood to the village or town, social and economic factors are inextricably interwoven. These factors need elucidation at this point

where agricultural economic history is being chiefly considered.

Agriculture experiences a painless revolution. In the early years of the twentieth century, the agricultural structure underwent marked changes. In the crop year ending July 30, 1914, our cereal exports were only one third the 1900 figure, or only about one ninth our total production as against more than one third in the years 1891-95. There were four reasons among others for this:

(1) Foreign countries were competing with us more and more; especially Canada, Australia, Russia, and South America.

(2) Our tariffs on European goods were being raised, thereby making it more difficult for Europeans to purchase our cereals.

(3) We had come practically to the end of our free land, and the value of a single acre had therefore increased tremendously. This in turn raised costs and prices.

(4) Urban population began to multiply even more rapidly than agricultural, especially because of the flood of European immigrants, attracted by (and imported for) our increasing industrialization. Thus some of our European customers became our inhabitants.

Moreover, because of the approach of the end of new land, the rate of agricultural production slackened. The farmer, however, became more prosperous, because the domestic market grew, accompanied by a rise in prices and in land values. Per acre valuation was \$11.14 in 1850, almost twice that in 1890. Between 1890 and 1900 there was little change, but between then and 1920 unearned increment in land, though fluctuating, averaged over 12 per cent a year. The average value per acre was \$21.31 in 1890, \$19.81 in 1900, \$39.60 in 1910, and \$69.38 in 1920. We had gone through a gradual and painless, even profitable, revolution, despite the loss of a large fraction of our European trade. Some have, in retrospect, called the period from 1900 to 1914 the golden age of American agriculture. Agricultural and industrial products were exchanged on a remarkably stable basis. This pre-war parity the Agricultural Adjustment Act of May, 1933, sought to regain.

Social and economic progress keep step. In the first decade of our century there was great stimulus on the human side of agriculture. President Roosevelt appointed a Country Life Commission. Agricultural education expanded enormously. The movement for consolidation of rural schools began. There was agitation on behalf of the country church. Economic gains of the period were reflected in improved family and community standards of living. Few, if any, noticed, in those years, that the price of land was rising out of proportion to the productivity of that land, and to the price indexes of agricultural commodities. The seeds of the economic and social agricultural travail of the 1920's and 1930's were being slowly sown, obscured in large part by the European war which soon engaged the whole world. For the value of the land increased far more rapidly than its productivity or than the price of the commodities it produced.

The World War and after. The war stimulated American agriculture tremendously. The slogan "Food Will Win the War" echoed throughout the land and the American farmer responded to it. Thirty million acres were added to our agricultural domain. Land already tilled was handled with increasing efficiency and per acre yields climbed speedily upward. We surpassed all previous export records.¹

After the war, European demand fell off rapidly because Europe strove for agricultural self-sufficiency for reasons of national defense, and for reasons of economic security. Since 1929 Europe has expanded her agricultural operations beyond pre-war levels,² not wholly because she wanted to stop purchasing from us, but because she was in our debt. There are only three ways in which international debts can be paid, and none of these ways was open to her. She could not pay us in gold; there is not enough gold in the world to pay even her present war debt to us. She could not pay us in goods; we

¹ About ten pages of material between this point and the end of the chapter are quoted without further reference from Brunner, *The Farm Act of 1933* (New York, 1933), by permission of the publishers, the Teachers College Bureau of Publications.

² The world surplus of wheat in 1933 just about equaled the total increased production in Europe.

wanted to sell, but not to buy, and raised our tariffs to prove it. A third possibility was for her to borrow money to pay for the goods which she wanted and which we wanted to sell her. For some time after the war this third expedient was tried, but when we stopped lending to her she had nothing with which to buy, and in consequence our farmers were raising food to sell to people who could not pay for it.

We become a creditor nation. Before the World War the picture was exactly reversed. We were a debtor nation and were paying our foreign debts largely in farm products, about \$200,000,000 a year in interest alone. After the war other nations owed us half a billion in interest, and today the sum has risen to a billion. The result was inevitable. For twenty years prior to 1930 we had sold to other nations more than one sixth of our farm, but only one twentieth of our non-agricultural products. Consequently, when European buying collapsed and we sold abroad in 1930 only 12.2 per cent of our production and in 1931 and 1932 less than 7 per cent, it was especially hard on agriculture.

Producing for vanished markets. Yet the American farmer went on producing for this vanished market. Moreover, instead of planting fewer acres he sowed more. The total net production of agricultural commodities in the United States in 1932, despite unfavorable growing conditions, was 4 per cent above the average for the period of 1919 to 1927.

This was not sheer perversity. The farmer had to meet fixed charges such as freight rates, taxes, interest, which remained stationary or increased. Each individual farmer argued, as one told the United States Department of Agriculture, that, "A man has to raise twice as many hogs at three cents as at six cents to stay in business." With six million farms in the United States, each trying its best to stay in business, this attitude is understandable, even though it contradicts the old theory of supply and demand. Theoretically, when prices fall from six to three cents, consumers will take more, thus eliminating the surplus, and at the same time the farmers, discouraged by the low price, will reduce production. But things have

not worked out that way in the fourteen post-war years so far as these export crops are concerned.

Causes of agricultural difficulties. The difficulties of agriculture began in 1920-21 with the post-war depression. Industry recovered in 1922-23, but agriculture did not, partly for reasons already noted; namely, the falling-off of the export market, and the high fixed charges such as interest and taxes. But there were other reasons. The food habits of the nation were changing. Our annual consumption of cereals, for instance, declined nearly 100 pounds per capita between 1909 and 1930. The number of acres required per person per year for food dropped from 3.2 to 2.7, a drop of more than 15 per cent. Our rate of population increase had also slowed down. The number of mouths to feed was not increasing as fast as formerly.

Moreover, farmers used more machine, less animal power. We have approximately 11,000,000 fewer horses and mules than twenty years ago. These vanished animals ate the product of about 15,000,000 acres of corn land, not to mention 20,000,000 acres of hay and oats land. Human beings, from choice, and hogs, because farmers have learned to feed them more efficiently, need together about 9,000,000 fewer acres of corn land than formerly. New uses for corn offset this decrease by not more than 2,000,000 additional acres. Thus, although consumers are better served, the farmers sell less.

Again mechanization and greater scientific knowledge have tremendously increased the efficiency of agriculture. In the decade 1922 to 1931 agricultural production per worker was about 22 per cent greater in volume than in the decade 1912 to 1921. Between 1870 and 1920 the volume per acre doubled. Canada, Argentina, Australia, and the Soviet Union have been similarly influenced. Surpluses have become a world phenomenon.

Agricultural adjustment has, for all these reasons, been a difficult process. Powerful forces let loose in agriculture cannot be changed as easily as a factory can be shut down. For example, between 1929 and 1931 steel production was cut 85 per cent, but agriculture cannot act so abruptly. Its produc-

tion problems are unique. Plant and animal biology and the care of soil are involved. The farmers, however, seemed about to succeed in their quest for readjustment to the new situation when, in 1929, the world-wide depression appeared and agriculture, along with other basic industries producing raw material, suffered tremendously, its previous problems still unsolved.

Measuring the damage. How much agriculture suffered can be shown by a simple statistical device which will also summarize the discussion thus far:

In the years before the World War the prices the farmer received and those he paid maintained a remarkably stable relationship. This relationship is referred to as pre-war parity, upon which much emphasis is laid in the Farm Act of 1933. This relationship, or ratio of the prices received by the farmer to those he paid, can be represented by 100 and an index can be constructed to measure the fluctuations in this relationship — that is, in the purchasing power of the agricultural producer.

This index of the Department of Agriculture has varied as follows:

Original Index		Revised Index	Original Index		Revised Index
1909-14	100	100	1927	95	91
1915-16	95	94	1928	90	96
1917	118	117	1929	89	95
1918	112	115	1930	80	87
1919	102	105	1931	63	70
1920	99	105	1932	53	61
1921	75	82	1933	50	64
1922	81	89	1934		73
1923	88	93	1935		86
1924	87	94	1936		92
1925	92	99	1937		93
1926	87	94	1938		78

In passing, it is well to note that the agricultural depression was world-wide and that it was especially severe in nations which, like our own, were largely industrial. If reduced to index numbers, the curve of the price of rice in Japan somewhat resembles that of wheat in the United States, and early in the 1920's the Japanese government began to attempt to support the price of rice by purchases. Farm relief was the most important domestic issue before the Japanese Diet in 1934, and from 1921 onward there had been thousands of farmers' strikes

in Japan, many of which produced violence, and most of which were rebellions of tenants against their landlords.

Three phases of the agricultural depression. This table makes quite clear the three phases of agriculture's long post-war depression. First there was the severe shock of the collapse of European demand and the recession of industrial activity in 1921-22. The second period, from 1923 to 1929 inclusive, was characterized both by a vain struggle to regain the pre-war price relationship between industry and agriculture, and, toward the end, by the beginnings of a new stabilization. The third is that marked by the world-wide economic cataclysm — the Great Depression, which covers the years 1930 to 1933. In the last-named year a fourth period began with the coming of a new national administration. In the table above, the parity index turned upward. The outcome of this period none can foretell, but whatever happens, it unquestionably marks a new chapter in the history of American agriculture because of the vigorous and completely new program on which the national administration embarked in an effort to re-establish agricultural prosperity and, through it, to aid the nation. This program will be discussed later in this chapter.

Farm and urban dollars out of step. But first, by way of summary, an illustration of the working of the parity index may be given. In short, the farmer in March, 1933, was receiving only 50 cents for goods that he sold for \$1.00 before the war, but he was paying \$1.03 for what then cost \$1.00. A pair of nationally advertised women's shoes could be bought for four bushels of wheat in 1920. Despite a 50 per cent cut in price, such a pair required eleven bushels in January, 1933.

It is quite clear from Figures 36 and 37 that for some years the farmer has been at a serious disadvantage in exchanging his products for the goods and services he has needed from the rest of society.

Many people find these figures and statements incredible. They know that the prices they are paying in the retail stores have not declined proportionately. They imagine that the price drop they have noticed is borne by all those concerned in

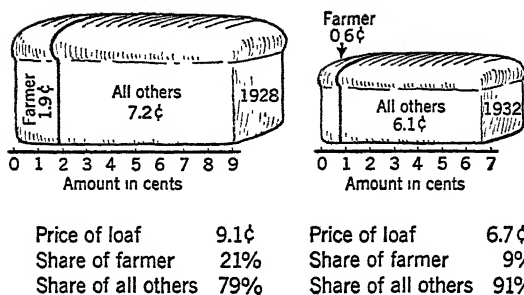
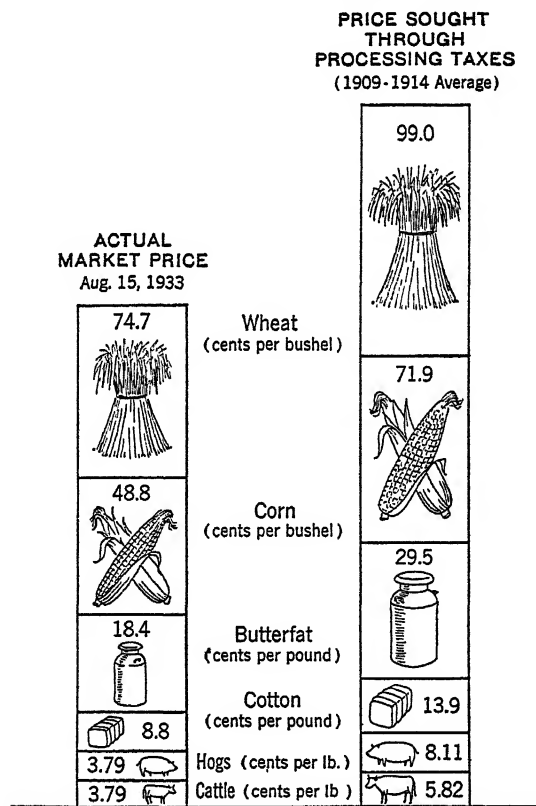


Fig. 36. THE FARMER'S SHARE OF AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE OF A LOAF OF BREAD, 1928 AND 1932, IN NEW YORK CITY

Source: National Crisis Series, *The Farm Act*, Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1933.



Courtesy of The United States News.

FIG. 37. THE EFFECT OF PARITY ON VARIOUS CROPS

placing food on their tables. But such is not the case. Take, for instance, the story of wheat and bread. In 1928 the wheat producer's share of the retail price of a loaf of bread in New York City was 1.9 cents; that of the bakers, millers, transporters, and retailers, 7.2 cents. In 1932 the producer's share was 0.6 cents, a drop of 68 per cent. The others received 6.1 cents, a drop of 15 per cent, less than one fourth the decline suffered by the producer. This is illustrated in Figures 36 and 37. Or, to take another instance, between 1929 and 1933 the price of sausage, pork chops, and other products from 100 pounds of live hog dropped from \$16 to \$10. Practically none of this drop was suffered by the meat packer, the railroad, or the butcher. All of that \$6 drop came out of the pocket of the producer. And so with other agricultural products.

Serious results. What the situation has meant can be read in terms of economic statistics and human experience. It caused a drop in farm income from about twelve billion dollars in the later 1920's to just over five billion dollars in 1932. Return on investment disappeared, land values dropped sharply, farm bankruptcies and tax sales rose sharply, but of all this more in the next chapter.

The indirect results were also serious. All this meant real suffering for tens of thousands of farm families and serious social and economic dislocation in thousands of rural communities. In the school year 1932-33 nearly 10,000 rural schools were opened for only part of the usual term or were closed altogether. In other communities teachers were not paid in full, or essential educational services were dispensed with. Other community institutions suffered, such as churches, the agricultural extension service, and those agencies of social welfare that had just begun in the 1920's to remedy their patent neglect of rural America.¹ The farmer and his wife made fewer purchases, and as a result it has been conservatively estimated that between six and seven million workers were unemployed either directly or indirectly because of the collapse of the

¹ Only one third of the rural counties had a social worker resident within their borders in 1932, according to the American Country Life Association.

farmer's purchasing power, approximately between one third and one half the total number of unemployed in the spring of 1933. Obviously, the merchant and the manufacturer suffered as well. The nation discovered that it could not prosper with agriculture prostrate.

One may well wonder what the historian of another century will say of the early months of 1933. In the world's richest nation perhaps one quarter of the able-bodied wage earners of four years previous were eager for work that was not to be had. Thousands of them, their reserves gone, shuffled in city bread lines. Meanwhile, great piles of grain were rotting in the Middle West, fruit went unpicked on California trees, and heavy-hearted farmers were pouring milk into rivers, all because there was no one with the price to buy.

Because of this situation, because farmers, as will be noted in a later chapter, were losing their farms and homes by mortgage foreclosures and tax sales, sporadic violence broke out in many farming areas in 1932 and especially in 1933. The best known of these attempts was that of the Farmers' Holiday Association which sought to force higher prices by withholding goods from market and preventing shipments of food and milk from reaching urban markets.

THE AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT

Because of this situation President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his administration decided, almost as soon as they assumed power, that the so-called Farm Act of 1933 was a national necessity to meet what the President termed "a national emergency." This law has introduced such vast changes into American farm practice and has such important sociological ramifications that a discussion of it is of prime importance. It represents, too, our first nation-wide effort to exert social control over a highly individualistic industry — agriculture; and as such, it will probably always have historic significance.

How the law operated. This Act empowered the Government

to adjust production with effective demand in order to restore the farmer's buying power; to finance and readjust farm mortgages and interest payments; and to bring about controlled inflation. The heart of the law was the first provision.¹ The goal was to restore the relationship between the prices the farmer received and those he paid that existed between 1909 and 1914. This is the "parity price." Behind all our complicated modern price system, we are still bartering one thing for another, bushels of wheat and corn, quarts of milk, or pounds of rice, for shoes, radios, or medical care. When we exchange on even terms, trading goes on steadily. But when trading gets too one-sided, agriculture and industry together head for trouble.

The Secretary of Agriculture was to arrange with individual farmers of seven specified crops to reduce their acreage or production by a predetermined amount and to compensate them either by rentals or by direct benefit payments. The amount of these payments was supposed to be such as to give the farmer the buying power for his produce he would have received for it in the five years before the World War. This meant, if the law achieved its objective, that the farmer would receive as much in exchange for a bushel of wheat or corn or a bale of cotton as he did in the years 1909 to 1914. The funds for the payments were raised by small taxes on the processing of the crops included; wheat, cotton, hogs, field corn, rice, tobacco, and milk and its products. Crop plans were put into operation only after approval by the farmers concerned. The Act was broadly conceived and gave wide powers to the Secretary of Agriculture so that, as conditions changed, changes could be made within certain limits. The wisdom of this was shown in the terrible drought of 1934. If 35,000,000 acres of the 40,000,000 taken out of production in that crop year had not been planted to soil-conserving forage crops, the damage to our livestock industry would have been a national calamity. The reductions arranged for in crops for which a plan was approved by the growers,

¹ The Second Section became the responsibility of the Farm Credit Administration discussed later.

applied *only* to the export portion of the crops. This was to prevent the risk of famine or high prices in the United States.

Farmer participation voluntary. The participation of any farmer in this plan to utilize or reduce food and fiber was voluntary and is still voluntary under the present law which succeeded the first. It is important to stress this point, not only because of the charges of "regimentation" made against the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, but also because in practically all the other democracies of the world that have experimented with marketing or production controls, such as Great Britain, Denmark, The Union of South Africa, and Australia, the plan proposed became mandatory on *all* producers as soon as a given proportion of growers or the acreage had been committed to the plan. To give a single illustration, the Australian Cane-Sugar Law not only made an acreage reduction of 20 per cent mandatory on all but the smallest growers, but also forced the cane farmers not to grow cane on any of their acres except those used for the purpose when the law went into effect. Under our law, however, the Government can exercise no compulsion, but by reimbursing the participants it makes it possible for them to cut their production. Efforts at voluntary, unsubsidized control of production in the past have failed because, in a far-flung, highly individualistic industry like agriculture, the few who reduced production lost money.

The law declared unconstitutional. In January, 1936, the Supreme Court, by a vote of six to three, declared the Act unconstitutional on the ground that it violated states' rights. Washington was immediately flooded with demands from farmers and townsmen alike for a substitute law. As a stopgap measure, parts of the program were included in a Soil-Conservation Act in which control features were largely absent and the benefits of which applied to all farmers.¹ In 1938 a new act was

¹ The ground of the Supreme Court decision aroused a storm of debate among farmers, the press of the nation, and constitutional lawyers. Much of the attack centered on the application of a "legal fiction" to an economic issue that transcended state lines. In a public address the late Lee McBain, Professor of Constitutional Law at Columbia University, called the decision one of the most important and most harmful ever made by the Supreme Court.

passed, but, before summarizing it, a word must be said about the results of the first Act.

Results of the first Agricultural Adjustment Act. The economic results of the Act are a subject of debate among economists so far as its benefits to the nation as a whole are concerned, though there is no doubt but that the Act increased farm purchasing power.¹

In the local communities the results were quite significant. In 96 of the 140 investigated in the series of rural trends studies, farmers and villagers alike agreed that the Act had been invaluable or had helped considerably. Ten more approved it, but felt the help had been slight. One in seven were opposed, the rest neutral. Opposition came almost entirely from areas where the first law did not apply, either because their crops were not included under the law or, as with dairying, because the producers failed to agree on a plan. Merchants in places where the Act operated reported greatly increased sales and large payments on indebtedness. In the drought area there was great enthusiasm for the Act. "It saved us from complete ruin," was a frequent comment by both farmers and villagers. Two instances are typical of many:

In one village which had suffered from both low prices and drought, one merchant had carried farmers for two years, especially for purchases of food and gas. The Agricultural Adjustment Act saved him from bankruptcy. Within a few weeks after the receipt of the checks, farmers paid off \$40,000 on their charge accounts, an equivalent of almost a year's average business. . . .

. . . In one community, the banker traced the results of the first check to come in, a fairly large one. The farmer paid the hardware merchant, grocer, doctor, dentist, and tax collector. Both doctor and dentist turned over the farmer's checks to others in the community whom they owed, including again the tax collector, who was able thereby to make an overdue payment to the School Board, which forthwith made a two weeks' payment on back salaries due teachers, who in turn immediately put the money into circulation.

¹ The best sources of information on these points are to be found in the study by the Brookings Institution of Washington, entitled *Three Years of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration*, and in the *Journal of Farm Economics*, especially volume xvii, nos. 1, 2, and 3, and volume xviii, nos. 1 and 2.

As other checks arrived, there was a general circulation of the funds, wiping out old obligations and securing much-needed consumer goods, which cleared up the whole credit situation and stabilized the entire community.¹

The law of 1938. The second Agricultural Adjustment Act, among other things, continues the soil-conservation program; provides for attempting to build up foreign markets for farm products and widen domestic distribution; grants loans on various farm commodities to prevent both price collapse and scarcity; sets up regional laboratories to find new uses for farm commodities and the by-products thereof; increases the share of payments to small farmers and tenants; secures greater protection for tenants with reference to payments and provides that the farmers by a two-thirds vote may establish marketing quotas to be effective only when there are surpluses above what the domestic and foreign markets will absorb. If more than one third of the farmers under such conditions oppose such quotas, they cannot be put in effect.

This law is not likely to be final. It has not solved all the problems, and continued changes and suggestions for change may be expected. Many farmers accept it because it is better than nothing, but criticize parts or all of it. A new law is likely to be passed before this book is issued. It is already apparent that political considerations rather than those based on economic data and experience are influencing the attitude of some legislators in regard to proposed changes. This is a danger in a democracy and the experience of New Zealand in fixing prices and distributing benefits under its law guaranteeing prices on dairy products shows how real that danger is.² But regardless of differing economic procedures and legal details, there are important social consequences of this type of legislation that deserve consideration.

Sociological considerations important and neglected. Too little

¹ Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.

² Cf. Brunner, Edmund de S., *Rural Australia and New Zealand*. Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1938.

attention has been paid to these. In the first place, huge proportions of the farmers concerned co-operated in the program. In the referenda held in the months before the Supreme Court decision nearly three million farmers voted on whether or not to continue specific crop programs, probably 90 per cent of the full-time farmers concerned. The favorable majorities were larger than in the first vote and ranged by crop from about 9 out of 10 to 49 out of 50. The 1938 Act is not as popular, but still commanded overwhelming support in 1939.¹ The significant thing here was the unanimity of farm opinion and also the high degree of interest evidenced. American farmers may be, as is often claimed, individualistic, but, from whatever motives, they acted practically as a unit in this matter. This is significant and may become more so. If agriculture should begin to speak as a unit in national affairs, as business frequently does or as labor did and may again, it will unquestionably become more powerful and more vocal in agricultural as well as in non-agricultural policies.

Again, the Department of Agriculture has tried to administer the Act democratically. It has organized no huge field staff. The scheme is built on local committees of farmers elected by their neighbors. The Government assigns crop quotas to counties. Allotments within counties are made by these committees. The man who cheats, if undetected by the local committee, is defrauding them and his other neighbors, not the Government. These local committeemen have been brought into closer contact with Washington than ever before. The sociological effects of this organization and its contacts should not escape notice. Will these groups become a potent force in marshaling rural public opinion and thus constitute themselves a political power? Will they and the Agricultural Adjustment Act permanently change the ethical concepts of the

¹ About 85 per cent, or nearly 6,000,000 of all farm families, received A.A.A. payments in 1939. Approximately 92 per cent of the cotton farmers, 80 per cent of corn and wheat growers and dairymen, and between 70 and 80 per cent of the tobacco, rice, and potato growers participated in the 1939 program. Cf. Statement of the Secretary of Agriculture before the Agricultural Sub-Committee of the Senate Appropriations Committee, April 13, 1939.

farmer and develop in the agrarian group the demand for the permanent assumption of "the rôle of Santa Claus" by the Federal Government? If so, may not class antagonism increase?

As Dr. W. W. Wilcox has said: "Farmers are enjoying the experience of getting results by group action. They are having it driven home to them . . . that the A.A.A. is for the farmer. Of course, they are not entirely overlooking the point that the broader and more common purpose of both acts is to improve national economic life. But the fact remains that the feeling of group solidarity is strengthening." Or will the preachments about the death of *laissez faire* and the coming of a socially planned economy capture the imagination of rural folk and make of them a great liberal block? It is too soon to answer this question, but the query is a real one, especially when taken in connection with the farm discussion groups and planning programs discussed in Chapter XVIII.

Other criticism of the Act. The Act has also been attacked on the grounds that it contravenes the law of supply and demand; that its objectives as they work out in dollars and cents would if achieved under present conditions create new problems; that a needed program of conservation should not be sold as a crop-reduction program; that it favors the farmer against the rest of the nation; that it is unethical to destroy cotton and reduce production when millions lack food and clothes; that the farmers will not co-operate; that they will falsify their acreage records, or by intensive cultivation on smaller areas raise as much as before; and finally, that the Act will destroy initiative and undermine American traditions. There is also a real and far from groundless fear that since acreage has been sharply reduced, many tenants, especially the croppers in the South, will be dispossessed entirely, a point discussed further in the next chapter. The experience thus far provides an effective answer to some but not all of these points.

Another problem that may prove increasingly difficult to cope with and which is beginning to raise critical questions arises from regional or crop variations in economic well-being.

In 1938 the purchasing power of the farm cash income compared with 1929 on a percentage basis varied sharply among the states. West of the Mississippi River there were only two states that slightly exceeded 1929. One state had only 55.5 per cent as much as in 1929. Eleven others had less than 85 per cent. East of the Mississippi, on the other hand, two thirds of the states had a higher purchasing power of farm cash income than in 1929. The cotton states were prominent in the one third that fell below that level.¹ Variations of this sort were cared for under the first A.A.A., invalidated by the Supreme Court, by extending aid only to depressed products and withdrawing aid when parity prices were established.

But the issues of the law, or rather of the philosophy inherent in it, go deeper than these considerations. Ideally the destruction of food and fiber in a needy world is unjustifiable. The Department of Agriculture itself tells us Americans drink only half enough milk and that our diet is sadly deficient in eggs, meat, fruit, and vegetables. We know that millions are poorly clad and cold. Had these millions money to buy, the cotton surplus would melt away. To restrict production under such conditions seems unsocial and uneconomic. Wealth is not a partner of scarcity. The only reply to these criticisms cuts deep. The measure is an emergency one. It amounts only to giving agriculture an equivalent for the tariff. It is but applying to farming the technique of industry when it restricts production.² In short, this law is defended as necessary in the sort of society which men have built for themselves. To challenge the law on this point is, then, its defenders admit, to challenge society.³ It is pointed out that the reduction in

¹ *United States News*, April 17, 1939.

² Steel production, for instance, at one time in the depression stood at 13 per cent of normal capacity despite needs for housing, rails, and other items. So with other industrial products.

³ How this appears to one from a civilization still largely agrarian may be seen from the comment of a Chinese farmer's son studying in this country in 1932. Said he: "I do not understand America. In my country when people starve from famine, it is because we have not the railroads to take them the food. In this country you have the food and the railroads and still you let city people starve. Why don't you take food to them?"

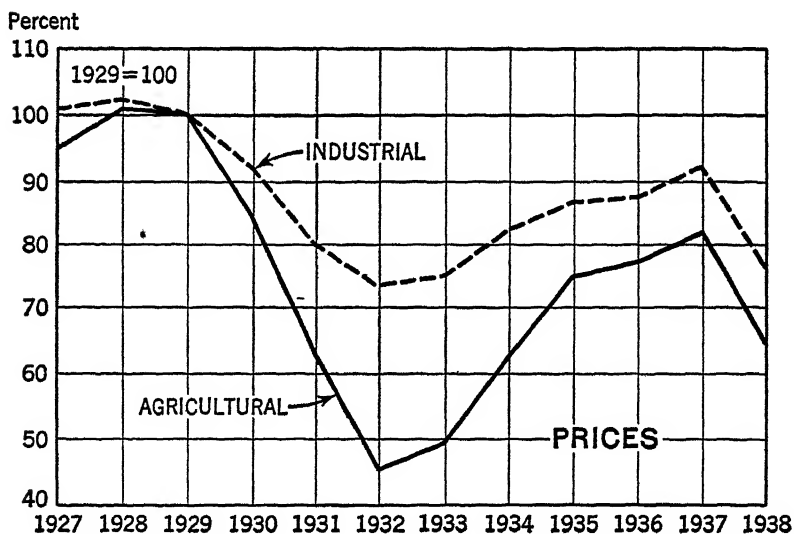
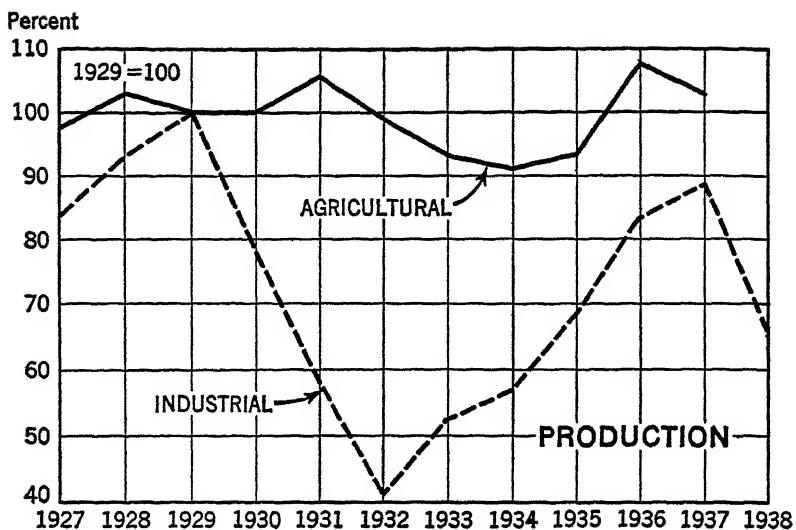


FIG. 38. PRODUCTION AND PRICES OF AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS, 1927-1938

Source: United States Department of Agriculture; Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

agricultural production has been very small in the aggregate, far smaller than in industry, as chart 38 shows; that the shifts from soil-depleting to soil-conserving crops have been socially valuable from the point of view of national welfare; and that agriculture alone cannot operate as if the world were better than it is.

Both the first and present Agricultural Adjustment Acts have been bitterly attacked by some sections of the urban press. Any proposal by any group in a democratic society must stand the criticism of the whole society. But some influential urban papers have printed alleged facts demonstrably false.^{*} This type of opposition disturbs urban-rural relations. It also points to the need for constant education in both city and country as to the needs of both and the interrelations of these needs. This is a continuing problem in social relations and education never long absent in a democracy.

Comparable laws in many other countries. The United States is by no means the only country that has passed farm-relief legislation. New Zealand has a law guaranteeing the prices of dairy products, its largest export. Australia has elaborate marketing schemes and a tax on flour to assist farmers; Brazil has long tried to assist coffee, and Japan rice growers. England subsidizes wheat farmers heavily, and so on.

Summary. The Act involves a new type of co-operation, far more extensive than the well-known farmers' co-operatives which have gained fivefold in membership during the last two decades and now include one third of all our farmers. This new type of co-operation, if it is to be successful, must include all major economic interests involved in putting food on the nation's dinner tables.

This is a primary reason why the Agricultural Adjustment Act lays down a new policy for American agriculture. It

^{*} To give a single instance: It was charged that specific individuals, with estates variously located as in Long Island and New England, had been given benefit payments for not growing potatoes on their lawns and in their flower gardens where no potato had ever been planted. The fact is that no payments were ever made under the law which extended A.A.A. principles to potatoes. The law was declared unconstitutional before the potato growers had voted or even agreed on a plan.

creates governmental machinery which can be utilized co-operatively by all producers in our present complex economic system. It gives them the means of organizing "to put their business in order." It provides, let it be noted, for no fundamental change in the distributive system.

It is clear, therefore, that the administrators of this law turned their backs on the old philosophy of accidental unconscious progress, of *laissez faire*. They frankly declare that the law is a bold experiment in voluntary social control applied to what from time immemorial has been one of the most individualistic of industries. As such, its future sociological importance is supreme, regardless of important unsolved economic problems and issues. Some day perhaps, by the very machinery set up, an agricultural policy can be built that will give the nation an optimum diet and the farmer a fair income.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. If benefit payments have been made in your community, how has the money been used and how has the community benefited? Ask your banker, storekeeper, the tax collector, and others about this matter.
2. From the agricultural census secure information as to quantities of chief crops raised in your state for 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930. If possible, compare with prices received. Interpret the results.
3. Compare over a series of months the prices of various kinds of goods the farmer sells (such as cattle, cotton, vegetables, etc.). Are prices of farm commodities going up as fast as prices of manufactured commodities?
4. Make a study of your own or some near-by neighborhood to see how much it has been affected by the agricultural depression and the Agricultural Adjustment Act.
 - a. Interview men and women engaged in various types of work in order to determine their attitudes toward the agricultural situation. Go through local newspaper files and study the Farm Act in relation to what local people have had to say about it.
5. Trace the exports on a given crop, the prices received on the farm in your state and the total production by five-year periods from 1900 to 1935. Graph your results and interpret them.
6. Conduct a class debate on the subject of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, such as, "Resolved: that the Agricultural Adjustment Act has retarded national recovery," or, "Resolved: that the Agricultural Adjustment Act is unfair to urban America."

7. Contrast the functions performed by the pioneer and the modern farm family in order to gain a livelihood.

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CHAPTER XIV

THE SOCIAL ECONOMICS OF AGRICULTURE

THE previous chapter dealt with American agriculture as a whole. Agriculture, however, is a highly diversified industry. Farms vary in size from a square mile to the few acres of a subsistence homestead; they vary in type from the intensively cultivated irrigated tracts of the Pacific Coast fruit-grower to the grazing lands of a Montana rancher. Crops grown in one section of the country may be unknown to another. Wheat and cotton are not neighbors and citrus fruit is a stranger to Maine potatoes. Moreover, the capital invested in farms varies, as do the operator's tenure, his attitudes about and participation in agricultural co-operation, and his credit needs. All these factors have reacted upon him in the social organization of rural life.

This chapter, therefore, attempts to catalogue briefly some of these essentially economic factors, to point out a few of their social implications, and to indicate significant differences among the various regions of the nation that are associated with differences in agricultural procedures.

THE AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE

Number of farms. But first of all it is important to gain some idea of the magnitude of the agricultural enterprise. More than half the total area of the United States is farm land. In some regions more than four fifths is so utilized. In only three regions is the fraction less than one half. Even in the industrialized Mid-Atlantic States over 50 per cent of the land is in farms. Taking the nation as a whole, our nearly seven million farms included in 1935 over a billion acres. In every census region the proportion of land in farms increased between 1930 and 1935. It is doubtful if this gain

has continued, certainly at the same rate since that time. Between 1920 and 1930 the number of farms decreased slightly in the nation and in six of the nine census regions. Since the census, however, the depression has stimulated urban-rural migration. The proportion of habitable farm homes unoccupied has never been lower. The 1935 Agricultural Census reported the number of farms as 6,812,350. This is an increase over 1930 of 524,000, or 8.3 per cent, and is the largest number of farms the United States has ever had. The largest proportional increases were shown in the industrial East. Most of the Middle-Western States show increases of less than 10 per cent. Connecticut, on the other hand, practically doubled the number of its farms and other industrial states showed increases of from 10 to over 20 per cent.

TABLE 47. NUMBER OF FARMS BY DIVISION

Division	In Thousands				Per cent Increase, 1920-1930	Per cent Increase, 1930-1935	Per cent Total Area in Farms, 1935
	1920	1920	1930	1935			
United States.....	6,361.5	6,448.3	6,288.6	6,812	- 2.5	8.3	55.4
New England.....	188.8	156.5	124.9	158	-20.2	26.7	39.0
Middle Atlantic.....	468.4	425.2	357.6	397	-15.9	11.2	57.0
East North Central..	1,123.5	1,084.7	966.5	1,083	-10.9	12.1	74.6
West North Central..	1,109.9	1,097.0	1,112.7	1,179	1.4	6.0	83.5
South Atlantic.....	1,111.9	1,159.0	1,058.4	1,147	- 8.7	8.4	55.7
East South Central...	1,042.5	1,051.6	1,062.2	1,137	1.0	7.1	68.9
West South Central..	943.2	996.1	1,103.1	1,137	10.7	3.1	72.1
Mountain.....	183.4	244.1	241.3	271	- 1.1	12.5	31.6
Pacific.....	189.9	234.2	261.7	299	11.8	14.5	30.7

Source: *United States Censuses of Agriculture, 1930, 1935.*

Size of farms. These seven million farms range in size, of course, all the way from little tracts of three acres, or even smaller if producing a net return of over \$250 annually, to holdings in the Far West that include more than 100,000 acres.

In the statistics dealing with the size of farms can be traced, from one point of view at least, the fascinating history of the development of the American continent. The first Europeans, their backs to the Atlantic, met and seized the opportunity

to slake their immemorial thirst for land. It was to be had for the taking and clearing. The pioneers pushing westward took two centuries to reach the Pacific. The sizes of farms meant little in those early days, but as the pioneering period ended, the changing size of farms began to be reflected in changes in farm management. At the turn of the century the average farm included 146 acres. It remained almost stationary for the next twenty years, being 148 acres in 1920, but rose to 157 acres in 1930. Most of this increase took place after 1925, when the average was 145 acres, and was shared by forty of the forty-eight states. Seven of the eight whose average acreage declined were in the South. Between 1930 and 1935, the average farm declined to 154.8 acres. This national average is made up of declines in six regions and gains in the three Southern regions. The declines are in part due to the newer farms resulting from the urban-rural migration, the gains are an evidence in part of consolidation of holdings. The data are detailed in Table 48.

TABLE 48. AVERAGE ACREAGE PER FARM BY DIVISION AND BY TYPE OF OPERATOR

Census Division	1920	1930	1935
United States	148.2	156.9	154.8
New England.....	108.5	114.3	97.7
Middle Atlantic.....	95.4	98.0	91.7
East North Central.....	108.5	114.7	107.9
West North Central.....	234.3	238.6	231.4
South Atlantic.....	84.4	81.6	83.7
East South Central.....	75.0	68.6	69.6
West South Central.....	174.1	166.7	176.8
Mountain.....	480.7	652.5	640.7
Pacific.....	239.8	231.2	208.6
Type			
Owner.....	162.2	173.3	168.4
Tenant.....	107.9	115.0	117.2
Manager.....	790.8	1109.1	1261.7

Source: *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, vol. v, Table 12, p. 37. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, "Agriculture, Summary for the United States, 1929 and 1930," Table 3, p. 24, and Table 7, p. 30; and *Census of Agriculture, 1935*, vol. 1.

Regional differences. This table also shows wide variations in size of farms among the nine regions. New England's

average of less than 100 acres is an indication of the preponderance of truck and fruit-farming. The low averages of the South bear witness to the large number of small farms operated by Negroes and poor whites. The square-mile average of the Mountain States indicates the huge tracts used for stock-raising and those cultivable only by the methods of dry-farming. The 40 per cent gain in the average acreage operated by employed managers is clear proof of the possibilities of large-scale farms, often run on the corporation plan, which mechanize their procedures as much as possible.

It should be remembered also that the size of a farm is one indication of population density, which is obviously low in a region where single farms average more than a square mile. Small farms mean compact rural communities, large ones, the reverse. These differences indicate also great differences in the size, strength, frequency, accessibility, and administration of schools, churches, libraries and similar social institutions. Transportation of pupils is obviously a problem in an area of huge farms and low population density. Churches, as will be seen later, are weak and at a disadvantage under such conditions.

Small farms gain. The average size of farms into which this huge agricultural area is divided, even on a regional basis, conceals many significant trends. When the farms of the United States are broken up into size groups it becomes apparent that American agriculture is tending toward smaller as well as larger units. Nearly three fifths of all our farms, 60.7 per cent, have less than 100 acres. In 1900 this percentage was 57.4. The farms of less than 20 acres account for this increase. In the 1920-35 period, the proportion of this size rose from 12.3 per cent to 18.4 per cent of all farms. These smaller farms in all regions are in large part located near the large towns and cities. As Chapter VII shows, there is a definite relationship between size of farm, type of agriculture, and distance from the city; and the farming area near the city partakes of more urban characteristics than that farther away.

Large farms increasing. On the other hand, just as the proportion of small farms increased, so did those of 500 acres or more. This group which constituted 2.6, 3.3 and 3.8 per cent of all farms respectively in 1900, 1920 and 1935, though only 256,114 in number, comprised 40.2 per cent of the total farm acreage of the nation in 1935, an increase from 33.6 per cent in 1900, when there were 217,200 of such farms. Other sizes of farms declined proportionately. Those of from 20 to 99 acres comprised 42.3 per cent of the nation's holdings in 1935 as against 46 per cent in 1930, despite a small increase in number. The number of farms between 100 and 499 acres also increased in numbers but continued the slow decline in proportion that began in 1900. Thirty-five and five-tenths (35.5) per cent of all farms are in this size group, 5 points less than in 1900. The trend is obviously, though slowly, toward small, intensively cultivated tracts and large mechanized holdings.

These tendencies raise two questions which have become increasingly important during the late 1920's and early 1930's, one relating to part-time farming, the other to large-scale farming.

Part-time farming. Many of the small farms are interesting also because their operators, while maintaining connection with the soil, seek to augment their income by non-agricultural employment. There seems to be a clear relation between type of farming, and rurality, and the proportion of farmers engaged in non-agricultural pursuits. For example, in Ohio only 8 per cent of the heads of farm families in the most rural areas studied had outside employment, while in the most industrial farm sections 27 per cent had non-agricultural occupations.¹ In a central New York community 17.8 per cent of open-country males were similarly engaged.² In some Massachusetts and Connecticut towns the proportions ranged from one half to two thirds.

¹ Lively and Beck, *Movement of Open Country Population in Ohio*. Experiment Station, College of Agriculture, Ohio State University, Columbus, 1930. Bulletin 467.

² Melvin and Kensler, *A Partial Sociological Study of Dryden, New York*. New York College of Agriculture, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1930.

The total number of farmers who worked off their own farms for pay or other income in 1934 was over two million or 30.5 per cent of all farmers, almost the same proportion as in 1929. There was only a slight difference between owners and tenants in this respect. There was marked variation among the regions. In the Mountain and New England States 42 per cent and 41 per cent of the owners and 46 and 53 per cent of the tenants had part-time employment. The proportion of farmers with supplementary jobs was higher in 1934 in the Middle West than in 1929 because of work-relief projects especially in the drought areas, though it was below the national average. Indeed this source of employment accounted for the holding up of the total to 1929 levels. The South was also slightly below the national average. In this region it is important to note that practically 30 per cent of the whites but only 24 per cent of the Negroes were able to obtain part-time employment. The discrepancy between the two races widened as the number of days worked off the farm increased, despite the fact that the Negroes operated smaller farms.

All told, the average farmer who worked off his farm in 1934 was so employed for 97 days, three less than in 1929, but there was an increase of more than 10 per cent in the number who had 250 days or more of such employment. It seems safe to conclude that part-time farming is a correlative of industrialization and that it has been stimulated somewhat by the depression.

The sources of such employment were varied. Only about 13 per cent were employed in pursuits related to agriculture. Many farm homes had put up "Tourists Accommodated" signs. Others had opened roadside markets, gas stations, or eating places. Other farmers drove school buses, hauled local milk, operated city or town milk routes, ran sawmills, did road work. A number, as in the past, were preachers, some of whom supplanted ordained clergymen whom the church could not afford to keep. A few took summer boarders. In some of the New England States supplementary work has grown to such an extent that it has become the main source of income

for many farmers who might be better characterized as part-time farmers than as farmers doing part-time work.¹

Within the last decade a number of industrialists, notably some of the coal operators and Henry Ford, have sought to link farming and industrial employment rather definitely, making the necessary adjustments in hours for employees who farmed. This scheme was urged on the British by Prince Kropotkin sixty-five years ago. It does not as yet seem to work very well.² Another type of farm is the so-called subsistence homesteads discussed later in relation to the whole matter of land utilization and its social implications.

Large-scale farms. Large-scale farms are often treated as synonymous with corporation farms, though such is not the case. Kansas, for instance, has a number of 2000 to 6000 acre family holdings, highly mechanized as to operation. Some of the operators of these holdings are called "suitcase" farmers because they can use motors to transport their farm machinery many miles from their homes. Such trends account for population decline in areas of mechanized farming and for the difficulties of social institutions like schools and churches organized on the assumption that the pattern of wheat farming in the first decade or two of the twentieth century was permanent.

Mechanization is now spreading beyond the wheat belt. The cheaper, all-purpose tractor is revolutionizing some areas, especially the Southwestern cotton area. In some counties the proportion of farms with tractors has increased in the last half-decade from one fifth to four fifths. Tenant farmers and croppers, white and Negro alike, as well as farm laborers, are being swept from the land. Two illustrations are typical: A cotton planter in the Mississippi Delta had 160 share-cropper families. He purchased 22 tractors and 13 four-row cultivators, let 130 families, about 700 people go, retaining only 30 and these on a day-labor basis. On another much smaller holding of about

¹ For the most complete data on this subject, cf. *Part Time Farming in the United States*. Washington, Bureau of the Census, 1937.

² Cf. Brunner, *Industrial Village Churches*. Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1930.

2200 acres, 35 tenant families were evicted, 180 persons, and the farm was operated by a few able-bodied single men and machines. In the latter case the families moved to the trade-center village and applied for relief. In the former some followed this policy, many others headed for California.¹

Paul Taylor of the University of California, in an address in April, 1938, reported an all too typical incident:

On a Sunday morning last June I stopped at a tenant's house near the Texas Panhandle. There I found seven sturdy young men gathered together for the morning. These Texans are all displaced tenant farmers, victims of mechanized farming. The oldest man in the group is 33. All are on W.P.A. They support an average of four persons each on \$22.80 a month. All are married and have families except one, who supports his mother and father. These seven Texans represent and support 29 persons. Native Americans all, none of them can vote, for Texas levies a poll tax of \$3.50 on man and wife. These men, like hundreds of others, find nothing they can turn to on the Plains where they were born. They search for 200 miles in every direction and find no places which they can rent. With mechanization, the size of farms is increasing, and little is left for the tenants but sub-marginal land, relief, or flight.²

Under such conditions rural schools and churches decline, village institutions are weakened. The rise in the standard of living of the remaining farm operators does not compensate for the community losses. Lowered standards for the victims of mechanization increase class consciousness and bitterness. Health conditions grow worse. Even those still living under the older arrangements keep constant company with stark fear of the same fate. The problem is little recognized except in the local communities affected. Those states receiving the migrants are affected directly but so are the states losing population and the nation that pays the social cost through relief and in other ways.

¹ About 200,000 distressed migrants have entered California since 1936. Despite the breaking of the drought the flow of these people barely slackens. "The drought undermined them, mechanization finishes them." Cf. chapter on "Population Mobility."

² Taylor, Paul S., "What Shall We Do With Them?" Address before Commonwealth Club of California, San Francisco, April 15, 1938.

Corporation farms. One aspect of large-scale farming is that conducted by corporations. The census gives no data on these farms as such. The only clue is in the number of farms operated by managers, which, however, includes many estates. The number of such farms has fluctuated widely. The high point was in 1920 when there were 68,449. During the first period of the depression there was a decline to 40,700 in 1925. More than half this loss was regained by 1930 after which there was a further decline to 48,104 in 1935, during a time when the total number of all farms was increasing. Acreage in such farms, however, increased steadily until 1930 and declined barely 2 per cent by 1935. About 6 per cent of all farm land belongs to manager-operated holdings but proportionately only one third as much of their acreage is in crop land as the case with other farms. In 1930 less than one per cent of all farms and one per cent of all acreage were operated by managers.

There have been many prophecies that large-scale farming, probably on a corporation basis, was coming. When it does come, the problem in that community is acute. An Iowa village paper thus describes the operations of a 24,000 acre corporation farm:

Each tract in the group is operated as a single field and is planted to a single crop in a rotation program. In the working of its present holdings, the company employs seventy-five general purpose tractors, nineteen combined harvesters and threshers, fifteen two-row harvesters, seventy-five plows, forty grain drills, and associated equipment. This machinery is transported over a hard surfaced State-road system by means of ten motor trucks with semi-trailers capable of hauling three tractors to a load. Field machinery is entirely equipped with electric lighting system to permit twenty-four hour operation when necessary.

This company uses no livestock, has removed boundary fences, groves, and often the buildings from its holdings, and employs only unmarried men. Village hardware and implement dealers and repairmen feared the ruin of their business. Village social institutions would also be greatly altered if this procedure became general.

On the other hand, one of the oldest corporation farms in the United States has found it profitable, after years of ex-

perimentation, to employ only married men and to make both the conditions of operation and of living as similar to those of normal farming as possible.

Other problems of giant farms. The alarm of the villages and of the displaced farmers whose foreclosed acres made up the holding of the corporation described are not the only problems of large-scale farming. Heavy capital expenditure for equipment is required, and new techniques must be learned. Moreover, problems of industrial relations arise, for often the agrarian is not a docile employee, as was proved in the mills of Elizabethton, Tennessee, and Marion, North Carolina, in 1929 and 1930. Moreover, even in 1928, according to the United States Chamber of Commerce, corporation farms were earning only a slightly higher return on their investment than the family size farms with which they were compared. A number of these giants have not weathered the depression. The increase in large-scale farming will doubtless continue, though not so rapidly as some have imagined, since it is not a demonstrated panacea for the ills of American agriculture.

Facts on the size of American farms do, however, indicate a growing specialization in agriculture. Small farms, intensively cultivated and given over largely to truck and fruit or to part-time farmers will doubtless stay and probably increase. The very large farm, also slowly gaining in numbers and acreage, will be used for those crops that lend themselves to machine cultivation. Finally, the old type of medium-size general farm, though slowly declining in relation to the total number, is not likely to disappear in any predictable future. The first two types, wherever they appear in force, are working changes in the traditional pattern of rural social organization, and they will continue to do so.

VALUE OF FARMS

Total investment. Not only is agriculture, judged by the proportion of the nation's area devoted to it and by the number of its separate units, a major enterprise, but also, when judged

by its capital values, it is our most important industry. The total value of farm lands, buildings, and equipment was nearly 78 billion dollars in 1920, of which 66.3 billions was in land alone. In each decade from 1900 to 1920 the value of farm land doubled. In the first of these years it was 16 billions; in 1910, 34 billions. Even this rapid advance failed by about 25 per cent to keep pace with the decline in the purchasing power of the dollar which occurred during the period of high prices caused by the World War. The agricultural depression carried total land valuation back to about 48 billion dollars in 1930, while the value of all farm property stood at 57.2 billions. In other words, between 1920 and 1930 the capital values of agriculture declined 27 per cent according to the census. This decline continued to 1935 when the census showed a further loss of 31.4 per cent to 32.8 billions, or more than 50 per cent below the 1920 valuations. This terrific deflation was one of the chief concomitants of the depression. It brought great suffering to agriculturalists and their families and vitally affected the credit situation, as will be shown later.

The decline did not proceed at the same rate in all regions as Table 49 shows.

TABLE 49. ESTIMATED VALUE PER ACRE OF FARM REAL ESTATE, BY DIVISION

(1912-1914 = 100)

Census Division	1920	1925	1930	1932	1935	1938
United States.....	170	127	115	89	79	85
New England.....	140	127	127	116	104	106
Middle Atlantic.....	136	114	106	96	85	90
East North Central.....	161	116	96	73	68	78
West North Central.....	184	126	109	81	68	70
South Atlantic.....	198	148	128	96	93	106
East South Central.....	199	141	128	97	93	107
West South Central.....	177	144	136	97	91	99
Mountain.....	151	105	102	82	70	75
Pacific.....	156	146	142	118	101	109

Source: Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

It will be seen from this table that the decline in the per acre value of farm real estate was most drastic in the areas

devoted to the export crops and to general farming. Regions engaged in dairying, truck, fruit and other specialized products, raised for the most part in proximity to cities and in the more industrialized areas, suffered least. This is another indication of the highly diversified character of American agriculture. By the end of 1933 and in the first half of 1934 a slight upturn in land values was noted, which continued until 1937.¹

Values per farm. It is important next to imagine what these huge totals mean in terms of the individual farm. Here again care must be taken to analyze the total figures. As Table 50 shows, the average value per farm in the United States dropped from \$12,084 in 1920 to \$9103 in 1930. In 1925 it stood at \$8945. The increase from 1925 to 1930 was due entirely to gains in the investment in implements and machinery and livestock. Land and buildings alone declined steadily from \$69.38 an acre in 1920 to \$53.52 in 1925 and \$31.16 in 1935. Table 50 also shows that the trends were not nationwide. The greater stability of the eastern United States, already alluded to, stands out clearly, and is related there to the specialized growth of cities and industrialization. Conversely the table shows that the deflation was most severe in the Central States, north and south.

TABLE 50. AVERAGE VALUE OF FARM LAND AND BUILDINGS PER FARM AND PER ACRE

Division	Average Value per Farm			Average Value Land and Buildings per Acre		
	1935	1930	1920	1935	1930	1920
United States	\$4823	\$7614	\$10284	\$31.16	\$48.52	\$69.38
New England.....	5696	7530	5860	58.28	68.56	54.00
Middle Atlantic.....	5385	7880	7061	58.74	80.40	73.99
East North Central....	6087	9660	13371	56.40	84.20	126.87
West North Central....	7954	13623	22307	34.37	57.10	95.22
South Atlantic.....	2434	3639	4488	29.09	44.60	53.20
East South Central....	1684	2528	3484	24.21	36.88	46.44
West South Central....	3542	5263	6316	20.04	31.57	36.27
Mountain.....	6531	10188	12958	10.19	15.61	26.96
Pacific.....	11099	18431	19941	53.22	79.70	83.16

Source: *United States Census of Agriculture, 1935, vol. III, Table 12.*

¹ Cf. Press Service releases of the United States Department of Agriculture, May 13, 1938.

The table yields no information on two other important items; namely, the trend in values from 1930 to date, and the relation of farm values to the proximity of farms to a metropolitan center. As already noted, values declined sharply from 1930 to the end of 1933. As Chapter VII shows, the loss in value was proportional to the distance of the farm from a city; the farther away it lay, the greater the average loss in value.

Factors affecting farm values. Various factors affect the value of individual farms, even though the size and soil fertility of two given tracts may be approximately equal. Farms near markets are more valuable than those farther away. This is true not merely in connection with the major sources of consumption, the cities, as shown in Chapter VII, but also within communities where, as a rule, farms near the village and town center and located on good roads, especially hard-surfaced ones, are more valuable than those farther away and on poorer roads. Obviously, also the better the soil the higher the value. It frequently happens that there are important social correlations to this fact. Numerous field surveys have shown that the farms well located as to the community center, roads, and soil are more likely to be represented in the membership of churches, farm bureaus, co-operatives, and other social and economic organizations than are those not so well located. So, too, children from the better located farms more often attend high school.

Again, farms in the older and better established areas, and those devoted to highly specialized or well diversified products, such as fruit and truck, are usually more valuable, at least on a per acre basis, than farms in more recently developed areas, in one crop or general farm regions.

Erosion a serious difficulty. A final factor of increasing importance needs to be mentioned; namely, erosion. It is easy to assume that land is a permanent factor. This is not true with respect to top soil, which can be washed or even blown away. The geographer, Russell Smith, has even raised the question as to whether or not this is a permanent country.¹

¹ Cf. *Survey Graphic*, September, 1928.

In North Carolina, county agents, for instance, have reported that in fifteen years after the timber has been cut from the lumbering areas of that state, this land, which has produced some of the finest forests, must be abandoned for agricultural purposes because of erosion. Soundings made above railway rights of way and in adjoining fields in Iowa show that an appreciable proportion of its fertile soil has disappeared — some of it blown clear to the Atlantic as in the dust storms during the drought of 1934. The Land Planning Committee of the National Resources Board, in a preliminary report in January, 1935, estimated that "the usefulness for farming of 35,000,000 acres has been completely destroyed, that the top soil has been nearly or quite removed from an additional 125,000,000 acres, and that another 100,000,000 acres are starting" in the direction of depletion. Here is a factor that can utterly destroy not only land values but communities as well. It is encouraged, according to H. H. Bennett, Director of the Federal Soil Erosion Service,¹ by careless farming and deforestation.

According to Mr. Bennett, much of the subhumid grazing country of the Great Plains and countless sloping sections of the more humid areas must be used for perennial growths of trees or grass if the nation wishes to avoid the huge economic and social loss of allowing expanding deserts to arise in our midst. In some areas this may "involve redistribution of population" and thus become a problem for those who are struggling with this issue as a part of President Roosevelt's program for our submarginal lands. There is no greater threat to land values than the factor of erosion, a problem created largely by human behavior.

FARM INCOME

Farm values represent a capital investment. It is natural next to ask what income is earned from this investment. It was pointed out in the last chapter that the increment of land

¹ Cf. *New York Times*, June 17, 1934. Feature Section.

values, far exceeding the increase in the prices of farm crops, gave the farmer for decades a source of wealth quite apart from the results of his management and toil. With the beginning of the agricultural depression in 1921, this stopped. Indeed, as just recounted, a reverse process set in. The matter of farm income therefore becomes of real importance. National figures were given in the previous chapter. The uses to which income is placed are discussed in the chapter on "Standards of Living." This section will deal simply with returns per farm.

The rate of return. Between 1921 and 1933 the average rate of return on invested capital varied from less than nothing per farm in the worst years of the depression to nearly 5 per cent in 1925. Translated into the reward for the average farm family for labor and management, after deducting interest, rental cost and value and expenses of operation, the figures vary from a deficit in 1932 to \$903 in 1925. These figures are, of course, in terms of all farms. It has already been shown that some farms are on little more than a subsistence level and that more than one seventh have less than twenty acres. This national average, therefore has, as usual, all the limitations of a single national figure. Two attempts have been made to break up these averages into more meaningful terms. One of these takes the average annual cash income per farm for the eleven years 1920-21 to 1930-31 inclusive by states. The results of this computation are given in Table 51. In the second attempt, Drs. Baker and Elliot of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics have tried to estimate the value of all farm products by groups of farms. Table 52, reproduced through the courtesy of Dr. Baker, presents in part the results of this work.

Significance of income groups. The significance of Table 52 is that it shows that the least productive three tenths of our farms, over 1.5 millions, produced for the commercial market less than 4 per cent of all our farm products. One and one fourth million additional farms added only 7.5 per cent more to the total. Thus only slightly more than one

half the farms accounts for eight ninths of our agricultural production.

TABLE 51. AVERAGE ANNUAL CASH FARM INCOME PER FARM
1920-21 TO 1930-31, INCLUSIVE

Rank	State	Annual Average Total (millions)	Annual Average per Farm
1	California.....	\$550.3	\$4,236
2	Nevada.....	13.5	3,862
3	Arizona.....	41.0	3,519
4	Iowa.....	652.2	3,048
5	Nebraska.....	363.3	2,856
6	New Jersey.....	79.5	2,814
7	Wyoming.....	41.3	2,621
8	Washington.....	176.2	2,512
9	North Dakota.....	192.0	2,493
10	South Dakota.....	196.7	2,486
11	Colorado.....	143.8	2,425
12	Kansas.....	395.9	2,389
13	Idaho.....	96.7	2,332
14	Montana.....	117.5	2,318
15	Connecticut.....	48.9	2,289
16	Illinois.....	505.1	2,237
17	Oregon.....	116.7	2,171
18	New York.....	375.1	2,077
19	Vermont.....	56.5	2,073
20	Massachusetts.....	62.9	2,072
21	Wisconsin.....	389.7	2,072
22	Minnesota.....	371.1	2,017
23	Rhode Island.....	7.5	1,988
24	Utah.....	48.7	1,854
25	Florida.....	95.6	1,666
26	Delaware.....	10.4	1,634
27	Maryland.....	74.8	1,602
28	Texas.....	696.2	1,595
29	Maine.....	72.7	1,589
30	Indiana.....	292.3	1,505
31	Pennsylvania.....	283.1	1,477
32	Ohio.....	353.5	1,471
33	Michigan.....	261.5	1,406
34	New Hampshire.....	26.3	1,397
35	New Mexico.....	42.4	1,369
36	Oklahoma.....	262.9	1,330
37	Missouri.....	353.7	1,292
38	North Carolina.....	276.1	994
39	Virginia.....	159.9	871
40	Louisiana.....	131.6	850
41	South Carolina.....	136.9	785
42	Arkansas.....	174.0	749
43	Tennessee.....	178.0	711
44	Georgia.....	184.2	678
45	West Virginia.....	58.5	674
46	Kentucky.....	171.7	664
47	Alabama.....	157.5	629
48	Mississippi.....	179.8	605

Source: Calculated from the data supplied by the United States Census of Agriculture, and Brookmire's Economic Service, by S. H. Hobbs, Jr., Department of Rural Social-Economics, University of North Carolina.

This table, therefore, exhibits the range of individual agricultural enterprise. It indicates the great complexity of conditions facing the schools when they try to utilize local situations in their teaching, especially of agriculture, and the extension service in planning their programs for farmers. If, as seems clear, many of the 48 per cent of farmers who produced

TABLE 52. ESTIMATED VALUE OF PRODUCTS SOLD FROM FARMS CLASSIFIED INTO VALUE OF PRODUCTS GROUPS, UNITED STATES, 1929 *

Value of Products Groups	Number of Farms	Approximate Value per Farm		All Products Less Family Living Cumulative Percentage	Cumulative Percentage of Number of Farms
		All Products	Family Living from Farm		
Under \$250	397,517	\$ 175	\$150	.10	6.63
\$250- 399	518,032	340	175	.99	15.26
400- 599	766,118	500	200	3.38	28.03
600- 999	1,245,684	800	225	10.83	48.79
1000- 1499	937,910	1,250	250	20.59	64.42
1500- 2499	981,763	2,000	250	38.46	80.77
2500- 3999	628,006	3,200	250	57.74	91.44
4000- 5999	291,112	4,900	300	71.67	96.09
6000- 9999	147,753	7,300	350	82.35	98.53
10000-19999	61,606	14,000	450	91.03	99.58
20000 and over	24,981	35,000	500	100.00	100.00
	5,999,882				

* It should be noted that this table is based, not on income as given above, but on the value of products, having no effect on cost of farm operation or fixed charges.

less than \$600 worth of products in 1929, and consumed practically all of it at home, are to be found among the Negroes, the southern mountaineers, and others on submarginal lands, it follows that the problem of dealing with submarginal population and removing them elsewhere is colossal. With this problem the Department of Agriculture is concerned. If, in addition, most of the rest of this 48 per cent are part-time farmers, it follows that the real problem of surplus control is with barely half of our farms, and that since nearly three million farmers, as stated in the last chapter, contracted to co-operate in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration program, this program had, in 1933-34, the clear support of a vast majority of the responsible farmers of the country. In other words, it had a nearly unanimous backing. Never before has agriculture been as united, and it is noteworthy that the farmers are agreeing on a program that is little short of revolutionary. When we stop to consider the traditional attitudes and behavior of American farmers, the sociological implications of the Farm Act of 1933 take on additional significance. Even with the changes occurring since 1935, the achievement of such a close approach to a national mind and collective action among American farmers is a sociological phenomenon of prime importance.

Some general considerations. In terms of the entire nation, farm income has varied since 1929 from about 5.25 billion dollars in 1932 to 12.1 billions in 1929. Since 1934, the figure has averaged around eight billions, counting benefit payments. In 1937 it reached practically 10 billions but dropped to 8.8 billions in 1938. Net income over farm operations, however, gained more, going from a low of 1.8 billions in 1932 to about three times as much in 1937 and 1938. In the latter year, net income, the amount available for family living, was 5.23 billions. Interestingly enough for fifteen years, through good and bad years, agricultural income and total industrial wages have shown practically a one-to-one correspondence. While no causal relationship has been demonstrated, this fact is at least another indication of the interdependence of our society.

On a per farm basis, excluding benefit payments and valuing products consumed on the farm at farm prices, the Department of Agriculture's estimate of income per operator ranged from \$230 in 1932 to \$917 in 1939. Benefit payments since 1933 have added from \$40 to about \$90 to these figures. However, if the price of farm products consumed at home is valued at retail prices, in order to get a better basis for comparison with urban costs, between \$200 and \$300 per farm operator should be added to the Department's income estimates.¹

But, as is already clear from the discussion on part-time farming, agriculture is not the only source of income for farmers. Almost one third of the farmers worked an average of about 100 days off their farms in 1934. Figured at the wages for common labor on federal highways, this would produce about \$330 a year per farmer employed or just under \$100 per farm for all farmers. While these data include payments for work-relief projects, there are indications that much of the off-farm labor of agriculturists is of the skilled or semi-skilled variety and it is quite probable that the total income from such non-farm work was from one fourth to one third more than indicated.² It is facts like these that help to explain the data on

¹ Cf. Martin, R. F., *Income in Agriculture*, chap. II. National Industrial Conference Board, New York, 1936.

² For instance in a relatively disadvantaged Southern mountain county, where the

retail sales given in Chapter XXI, which might seem overestimated if considered in relation to agricultural income alone. Even so it must be remembered, as the estimates in Table 52 show, that including family living secured from the farm at farm prices, half the farmers had incomes of \$1500 or more in 1929 and that more than one third averaged better than \$2250.

LAND TENURE

Thus far the discussion has proceeded without mention of the arrangements by which farms of a given size, value and productive power are operated. Land is valuable, of course, only because on it men find shelter and employment, and because from it food and fiber can be raised and minerals extracted. It is the foundation of life. Under everything is the land but on the land are people, and land has value only in its relation to people. Mankind has evolved two major devices by which human beings are associated with specific plots of land from which they can produce needed agricultural commodities. The *owner* possesses his acres, controls them, and is the sole beneficiary of their productivity after his expenses are met. The *tenant* lives upon and cultivates land that belongs to another individual with whom he shares both the proceeds of his toil and usually the responsibility of management.

The hunger for land. There are few races that do not display a desire for land, and the more rural they are the stronger this desire usually is. To the peasant, land represents ultimate security. Agrarian unrest has often developed where the growth of commercialization caused the tillers of the land to lose their complete control of it. Land hunger was an important factor in both the Mexican and the first Russian revolution; and in the former's new constitution, as well in that of Czechoslovakia, there are provisions making land available to the peasants at the expense of the great estates.

only net return from agriculture came through the living supplied by the farm, averaging \$481, a sample group of 228 farmers showed a non-farm work income averaging \$368.87 in the worst year of the depression. Cf. Nicholls, W. D., and Ranse, W. L., *Farm Organization and Family Incomes in Knott County, Kentucky*. Agricultural Experiment Station, Lexington, Kentucky, 1934.

Causes for rise of farm tenancy. The American tradition has always been one of land-ownership, largely because so much land was available for so little money for nearly three centuries after the first settlements on the Atlantic seaboard. Even yet there is no pressure of population on the land such as one observes it in the Orient. The so-called tenancy problem did not present itself in this country until after the Civil War; and when it came it was, of course, directly associated with the declining quantity of good land available for homesteading under federal grant.

But there was at least one other cause for the rise in farm tenancy in the United States. Young men desiring to be farmers and not possessing sufficient capital to buy a farm, at once sought one they could work on shares. Conversely, elderly farmers desiring to retire sought to rent their farms, often to their own sons or nephews. The blood tie, therefore, was prominent in early tenant arrangements, and though its importance decreased, even in 1930 one fifth of the tenants were related to their landlords. This national average is brought down by the South where the proportion is less than one tenth. In the Middle West, Middle Atlantic, and New England States it is nearly one third.

It was the prevalence of the kinship factor in the early development of farm tenancy, along with a few other factors, such as the tenant's desire to be free to climb the agricultural ladder from tenancy to ownership when opportunity offered, that is responsible for the short lease, usually for only one year, which prevails in many sections. It is frequently judged to be socially disadvantageous when the tenant is unrelated to the landlord, since the necessity for an annual renewal of the lease makes for insecurity and removes some of the incentive to conserve the soil and property.

In the matter of farm tenancy, then, three rural sciences meet. To the soil scientist, tenancy has become almost synonymous with "mining" rather than cultivating the land. To the economist, tenancy means the problem of having a farm support more than one family. The sociologist is interested in the effect of tenancy and its arrangements on

the tenant and the social life and institutions of his community.

Growth of farm tenancy uneven. The growth of farm tenancy in the United States has been uneven. When first measured by the census in 1880, it was found that one fourth, 25.6 per cent, of the farms were tenant-operated. Ten years later the proportion had risen to 28.4 per cent.

During the closing decade of the nineteenth century began the rapid rise in the price of farm land which lasted for thirty years. Tenancy also rose apace, among many other reasons because it then took longer for a prospective owner to accumulate capital sufficient to purchase a farm. The proportion of tenant-operated farms increased by more than one fourth, and stood in 1900 at 35.3 per cent of the total.

Many felt that this was an alarming portent in American life. Tenancy was increasing most rapidly in the most prosperous agricultural areas. It was pointed out that owner-operators supported community organizations and that tenants did not. Tenants were found to have a lower standard of living than owners. There were prophecies that the American farmer, like the European, would become a landless peasant.

But with the new century the rate of increase in tenant-operated farms slackened. In 1910, 37 per cent of the farms were so managed; and in 1920, 38.1 per cent. Despite the early years of the agricultural depression, the special agricultural census of 1925 found only a slight increase in tenancy, 38.6 per cent. In 1930, however, the rate had increased to 42.4 per cent. This was a sharper increase within five years than occurred in any ten-year period in the present century. By 1935 the proportion of tenant-operated farms declined slightly to 42.1.

These national data conceal, especially in the years 1930-35, some very important diverse regional trends. Tenancy has always been higher in the sixteen Southern States than elsewhere because of the high concentration of Negroes and of share croppers. These states have about one half the nation's farms, but almost two thirds of the nation's tenants. Yet in

this area, despite the depression of the 1930's, the rate of tenant-operation declined from 55.5 to 53.5 per cent of all farms. Moreover, in the five most northerly states of these sixteen, tenancy increased proportionately, 23.7 per cent, though the number of all farms gained only 14.9 per cent. The decline in the other eleven is therefore slightly more than two points. In the 32 states outside the South the proportion of tenant-operated farms rose from 28.5 to 30.6. Some of the largest gains were reported from the states in which the proportion of farm tenancy was already high. Thus in Iowa half the farms were tenant-operated in 1935. Even in the New England and Middle Atlantic States there were substantial increases despite a previous steady decline in tenancy lasting for several decades.

Causes of increase in tenancy, 1930-35. The explanation of these two trends appears to be quite clear. In the 32 Northern and Western States many persons who had been owner-operators were forced back into tenancy by foreclosures on mortgages which, as the next chapter shows, were very numerous during the depression. One eighth of the tenants interviewed in a special sample census had been owners at one time. In the South, on the other hand, while foreclosures also occurred, the decline in tenancy was largely a result of the displacement of cotton share croppers thrown out partly because of the reduction of cotton acreage under the A.A.A. and more largely because of the introduction of mechanization, already discussed. The four states, Georgia, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, in which this latter process has gone farthest, account for more than the total net loss in the number of croppers in the South. Nearly 66,000 croppers were involved, almost three fifths of them white. The percentage decline in the number of croppers in these states between 1930 and 1935 was as follows:

State	White	Negro
Georgia.....	-18.9	-21.6
Arkansas....	-16.7	- 9.6
Oklahoma..	-33.6	-41.2
Texas.....	-26.3	-29.2

Those displaced were forced into the lower status of laborers and huge proportions had to depend more than ever on relief.

In 170 of the most important cotton counties in the South, located in eleven states, that contained in 1930 more than two fifths of all the South's share croppers, Frey and Smith¹ found a loss of 18.2 per cent in the number of white and of 7.6 per cent in the number of Negro share croppers between 1930 and 1935. Two thirds of the decline in the number of white and two fifths of the loss in the number of Negro share croppers took place in these counties.

It seems clear, therefore, that the trends and causes of the decline in tenancy in the South are rather localized, but the trend will probably spread as crop diversification and the increase in mechanization spread over the South. It is conservatively estimated by the National Research Project² that when the mechanical cotton-picker is perfected half a million persons will be displaced within five to ten years.

King Cotton is sick. The troubles of the Southern tenant were not caused by the A.A.A. and the all-purpose tractor. Indeed, several studies in three states show that those *tenants who were retained* were better off in 1935 under the A.A.A. than they had been before. There has always been high mobility among share tenants and croppers in the South. Forty-four per cent of all Southern tenants had been on the farm where they were enumerated in 1935 for less than a year. Those permanently displaced were the poorer workers, the discontented, restless and otherwise undesirable persons. There have been periodic crises in cotton for decades. There was growing competition from abroad in India, Egypt, and to some extent in Brazil and later from Russia, long before the A.A.A. The lot of the plantation owner was not a uniformly happy or prosperous one as the record of farm foreclosures in the South from 1921 on shows. Ten per cent of the plantation land in the South is in the hands of mortgagees and 25 per cent

¹ Cf. *Rural Sociology*, December, 1936, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 483-515.

² Horne, R. L., and McKibben, E. C., *Mechanical Cotton-Picker*, Philadelphia, 1937.

of individual holdings in 1934 had been acquired since 1929.¹

In 1934 the average net income per plantation was just over \$6000, including the A.A.A. benefits. This compared favorably with 1929. Roughly speaking, the net is half the gross income, and also roughly the plantation owner netted \$2600 in 1934 of which \$1750 represented the normal interest on his investment and \$850 his salary for management. On the average plantation, the net income of croppers in this year averaged \$312, of cash renters \$354, and of share renters \$417. The average plantation had eight croppers, one cash, and two share renters. In addition there were three wage hands who collected \$180 a year each for what work they did. More than half the landlords had to borrow an average of \$2300 for current expenses each crop year, at between 10 and 16 per cent interest, and combined interest on short- and long-term loans almost equaled the landlord's labor income. During the seven months when there is little active work in cotton culture, the landlords have to advance about \$13 a month per family to keep their tenants alive. When the tenant moves before he "makes" the next crop, this advance is lost. Seldom is there a written contract between the landlord and tenant, least of all the cropper, and this opens the way to exploitation and misunderstanding.

The average tenant's home is a two- or three-room shack with a single thickness of rough boards, usually unscreened, and with half or more of the houses without window-panes or watertight roofs. Medical care for these people is all but nonexistent, illiteracy rates are high, schools and churches poor.² There is not much resemblance between such conditions and "the American standard of living." Yet there are over 700,000 share croppers in the South, almost equally divided between Negroes and whites and over a million cash and share tenants.

Uncle Sam to the rescue. In 1937 Congress set up the Farm Security Administration which among other things was given an appropriation of \$10,000,000, rising to \$50,000,000 a year in

¹ Woofter, T. J., Jr., *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*, chap. v. Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1936.

² Cf. Woofter, *op. cit.*, chaps. vi, vii, ix.

1940 and thereafter, to finance able and selected tenants in the purchase of farms. Low interest rates and repayment of principal in between twenty and forty years are provided together with some guidance in farm management. This administration is also charged with the care of about 650,000 farm families, rehabilitation clients, whose farm management they are supervising and whose family standards of living their social workers are guiding. There have been most encouraging changes in the net worth of many of these families. On the basis of a sample of more than one third of these aided families, there has been an average increase in their net worth of from \$550 to \$842 or 53 per cent. This is not a large amount, but it means much to families so near to destitution. In addition their standard of living had risen. They more than doubled their home canning of fruits and vegetables and almost doubled the quarts of milk, pounds of meat, and dozens of eggs raised for home use. The value of products produced for home use by the average client's family went up 50 per cent to \$376. It is estimated on the basis of records to date that over 90 per cent will repay the rehabilitation loans in full.

Broader aspects of the problem were attacked by a presidential tenancy committee, reporting in 1937. It planned in some detail for a Farm Security Corporation to assist tenants toward ownership and made suggestions as to the rehabilitation work. Other recommendations were designed to discourage land speculation, to improve lease contracts and landlord-tenant relations, to relieve small homesteads of taxation, to safeguard civil liberties. The need for improved educational and health services was also stressed.

Tenants help themselves. One interesting development has been the formation of the Southern Tenant Farms Union with about thirty-five thousand members in 1939. For a while it was associated with the C.I.O. but withdrew. It has asked for wages of one dollar a day for cotton-picking, has sought to prevent flagrant exploitation, has helped tenants to use federal agencies, and has constantly tried to keep the plight of the cropper before the nation. Both whites and Negroes are mem-

bers. There have been several strikes and in more than one place it has achieved somewhat improved conditions.

In summary. Conditions in regard to tenancy vary greatly among the regions but nearly two thirds of the nation's tenants are in the South. Elsewhere the tenant is on the road to ownership or remains a tenant by choice. He often owns some livestock and equipment. His income may compare not unfavorably with the owner's. He is still less secure, moves more often than an owner, and is not so well rooted in the community. But in the fifty years from 1880 to 1930, the United States has seen the number of farms operated by owners decline from three in every four to less than three in every five. In the South, by 1930, owners controlled barely two in every five farms. In the Middle West the proportion of owners to tenants is approximately two to three. In the other regions owners are on four of every five farms or better. In all the West South Central States and in eight other Southern States, between three fifths and four fifths of all farms are tenant-operated. Here is clearly another evidence of Negro and poor white farming. In New England, on the other hand, the proportion is less than 10 per cent. The Middle West approximates the national average.

Factors associated with tenancy. Tenancy is associated with a number of rather definite factors. It is low in new, rich areas, such as the irrigated sections of the Far West. It is low also in areas of poor or, at least, below average fertility, such as much of New England, where it is obviously more difficult for a farm to support more than the operator's family. This factor seems to be true even within states. The fertile limestone counties of Pennsylvania have the highest tenancy ratios in the state. Tenancy in the most fertile fourth of the counties in Illinois, measured by value of crops per acre, is more than half again as high as in the least productive fourth of the counties. Since topography is often associated with soil, it is not surprising to find hilly acres with lower tenancy ratios than level ones.

Tenancy is also associated with some crops more than others.

Cotton and tobacco, with their Southern locale, are peculiarly crops cultivated by tenants. In the more specialized products tenancy is lowest. Race is another factor. In some states the proportion of Negro farmers who are tenants is practically 90 per cent. On the other hand, tenancy among foreign-born whites, especially northern Europeans, and of their native-born children, is considerably lower than among native stock. Finally, the tenant is younger than the owner, as would be expected, since the normal procedure up the agricultural ladder is from laborer, to tenant, to owner.¹ Of late years, farm ownership ratios have been rising near cities, though declining elsewhere, which reverses a previous trend.²

In 1920, 44 per cent of all farm operators had once been tenants and, outside the South, a large proportion of tenants expected to become owners. The present situation has produced an unmeasured degree of change in the traditional procedure and attitude toward farm ownership. With taxes at a high level, with the great difficulty in borrowing money on farm land, and the even greater difficulty of repaying it with interest out of the price level of the last twenty years, an increasing number of tenants have come definitely to feel that they would be better off to remain tenants.³

Social effects of tenancy. If tenancy is a function of industrialism and therefore an inevitable phenomenon of the present state of development in the western world, those who maintain that land-ownership is one of the strongest bulwarks of national safety probably face inevitable defeat. But the United States has in the past placed powerful assistance at the disposal of those who crave their own stake in the land, and it may do so again, not only by advancing credit, but possibly by carrying out some of its embryonic policies for land utiliza-

¹ For further discussion of factors related to farm tenancy, cf. Goldenweiser, *Farm Tenancy: 1920*. (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1926.) On the foreign-born, see also Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children* (Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1929), chap. II.

² Cf. Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, pp. 135 and 340.

³ For a case illustration of this, see Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, pp. 327-28. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1933.

tion. Moreover, the increase in the ratio of farm ownership near cities must be considered in any argument on this point, though it may be due to the specialized type of agriculture required near cities.

Whether an unavoidable accompaniment of industrialism or not, areas of high tenancy differ from areas of high ownership in certain respects. The social scientist is interested in these differences, and the conditions they create are frequently problems for the rural educator, social worker, and clergyman.

There have been numerous studies of this point. As Chapter XVI, on "Standards of Living," shows, tenants are likely to have a somewhat lower standard of living than farm owners, at least as measured by the respective proportions possessing telephones, automobiles, musical instruments, bathtubs, electric lights, furnaces, and other conveniences. In these respects the tenant who is related to the owner of the farm makes a better record than the tenant who has no such tie.

These facts do not necessarily discredit either tenants or tenancy. The tenant is younger than the owner. He has not had an opportunity to acquire all the conveniences of life. He is perhaps trying to save for a first payment on his future farm. Moreover, he is more likely than the owner to have young children.

Effects on community usually adverse. When all allowances are made, however, it is clear that the social consequences of a high proportion of tenant-operated farms in a community are unhappy. Studies by the Institute of Social and Religious Research seem to show that such effects begin to appear when the ratio of tenant- to owner-operated farms exceeds one in five.

Up to this point, for instance, the proportion of tenants belonging to church and social organizations is approximately the same as that of owners similarly connected. Beyond this point, the differences become more pronounced. For example, in Middle-Western counties where 50 per cent or more of the farms are tenant-operated, there are only one third as many tenants as owners listed as active church members. Although

these figures may vary with the type of organization, the trend is the same for lodges, farm bureaus, and all important types of social organizations.

An obvious corollary follows. In tenant-dominated communities all types of social organizations tend to be weaker and less progressive than in localities in which owners preponderate. One obvious reason for this lies in the insecurity of the renter's tenure. If he operates under a short-term lease he is not sure how long he will remain in the community. He hesitates to form ties until he feels more certain of permanence. Eventually, perhaps, he habituates himself to living more apart from organized-social life than does the owner who, because of his capital investment, is likely to be more securely anchored to the locality and, therefore, more interested in its social life.

Another reason for the less satisfactory condition of social organizations where tenants form a considerable fraction of the population frequently lies in the phenomenon of absentee landlordism. Inevitably absentee landlords become interested chiefly, if not exclusively, on the return from the farm. Community betterment, especially if it raises taxes, is definitely unwelcome and hence opposed, as many a schoolman has found out to his sorrow. In these days when taxes consume such a large part of the landlord's income, such an attitude is understandable.

The unfortunate social consequences of farm tenancy are especially noticeable in the South, where the problem is also complicated by the large number of share croppers as already noted. But even elsewhere class distinctions between tenants and owners occur, since the two groups often belong to different churches, lodges, and social organizations.

FARM LABOR

The preceding section has mentioned agricultural laborers several times. The farm laborer has been declining in numbers with the advance in technology and is illy paid. Between 1926 and 1936 the demand for hired farm labor declined 17.6

per cent, from slightly over three to just under two and one half million. At the low point of the depression there were 150,000 fewer hired farm hands than in 1936.¹ There seems little likelihood of an increase in employment that would carry the level back to that of 1926. The spread of mechanization makes that unlikely. At the same time the fluctuations in demand as among crops and regions are considerable. They are influenced by trends in the number and size of farms and changes in farm management.²

The demand for agricultural laborers varies with the period of the year. It is naturally highest in harvest time. The fluctuation in any given year is often as much as 100 per cent from the low point and in numbers of persons employed at any given time from about one and one half million as a minimum to approaching four million as a maximum.

Wages low. Only 14.2 per cent of all farms were employing hired hands at the time of the 1935 census, although 95.3 per cent of all farms used family labor. There is some reason to believe that as mechanization took place on the farm and conveniences were installed in the home, many farmers and their wives dispensed with hired help and did the work themselves. Doubtless the depression is partly responsible for this. Between 1910 and 1914 the average wage of a farm hand was about \$22 a month with board or \$29 without, the day rates being \$1.16 and \$1.42 respectively. Wage rates showed fluctuations comparable to those in industry but have always lagged behind industry. The high figures in recent years on a monthly basis were about one third above the 1910-14 rate but in the first quarter of 1939 had lost half of that gain. In the South the rates are sharply lower than elsewhere. Usually they range from 40 to 50 per cent below the national average. They are highest in the Pacific Coast States with New England and the Mountain States in the next places. Here they range from 25 to 75 per cent above the average. In the main, the index

¹ Cf. Shaw, E. E., and Hopkins, John H., *Trends in Employment in Agriculture, 1909-36*. National Research Project, W.P.A., Philadelphia, 1938.

² *Ibid.*

numbers of farm-hand wages and of prices received by farmers tend to fluctuate in harmony.¹

Migrant laborers present problem. Apart from the social problems obviously related to the low wages of farm labor, the chief concerns relate to the large numbers of migrant laborers. There are thousands of families whose labor makes possible the harvesting of fruit, vegetables, hops and other crops, who travel from locality to locality and are employed for periods of from several weeks to several months and then dismissed. Their total employment averages only six months a year. They live in camps often under unsanitary conditions. They have no connections with organized community life. The schooling of their children is at best seriously interrupted. Lack of medical care menaces the community as well as the migrants. They are welcome nowhere after their short-time jobs are over. The group is composed of predominately native white Americans largely between the ages of 21 and 45 years. The migration of these workers from place to place is largely unguided or illy directed. Earnings though difficult to determine average about \$300 a year for single men and \$400 for families. Public relief, dependent upon legal settlement as it is in most communities, is therefore not available. The problem is most acute on the Pacific Coast and in a few of the eastern seaboard states.²

TAXATION

Mention has already been made of the recent growth of the feeling among tenants that despite its handicaps, the position of the tenant operator was more secure, economically speaking, than that of the owner, at least under present conditions. One of the most important reasons for this attitude lies in the matter of taxation.

Taxation is almost the oldest device by which society pays

¹ Black, J. D., "Agricultural Wages Relationships," *The Review of Economic Statistics*, vol. xviii, February and May, 1936.

² Cf. *Migration of Workers*. U.S. Department of Labor, 1938, mimeographed, especially vol. 1, chaps. ix, x, xiv, xv, and xvi. Also an excellent summary of the whole situation in *Fortune* for April, 1939.

for its collective activities. As such, taxation has sociological importance, although it is primarily an economic subject.

The rise in taxes. As noted elsewhere, rural America spent generously of its income in the 1910's and early 1920's for improved schools, roads and other social services, and through bond issues by local municipalities and counties mortgaged its future profits as well. As a result taxes mounted rapidly, almost doubling between 1917 and 1930.¹ Since then there has been a decline, but taxes are still above the 1914 level. With the decline in commodity prices, increased taxation meant that it took more bushels of wheat or corn, more bales of cotton, more quarts of milk to pay a dollar's worth of taxes; in fact, several estimates for 1930 and 1931 concluded that between one third and two fifths of the net income of the average farm was absorbed by taxation.

The farm share of the tax dollar. Even before the 1930's the National Industrial Conference Board of New York City estimated that the farmer was paying one fifth of the tax bill of the nation, in spite of the fact that his share of national income was only one tenth. About a score of the colleges of agriculture have made taxation studies in the last ten years.² It has been found, for instance, that in 1928 in Indiana farm taxes absorbed two fifths and the city taxes one fifth of the rent. In Michigan between 1919 and 1925, even if the so-called upper peninsula is excluded, farm taxes took 52 per cent of the net income of the average farm. In Pennsylvania, the farmers spent a 13 per cent larger share of their earnings for taxes than did the state as a whole, including the farmers.

¹ In terms of index numbers the rise in farm taxation, using certain significant years, is as follows:

1913....100	1925....270
1917...129	1930...281
1918....137	1931....277
1919...172	1932....253
1920....244	1935....178
1921....259	1937....187

(Source: Bureau of Agricultural Economics.)

² For a summary of fifteen of these studies, cf. *Taxation of Farm Property*, by Whitney Coombs, United States Department of Agriculture, Technical Bulletin 172, February, 1930.

Taxation is, therefore, a practical problem for the school superintendent, the librarian, or social worker, all of whom are concerned with the task of keeping such social utilities at maximum efficiency. Studies by the Institute of Social and Religious Research have revealed numerous instances where the enthusiasm for a new school building, community house, or other public building has resulted in saddling the community with so large a debt that all other social improvements had to be postponed indefinitely.

Results of high taxation. High taxes were, in many cases, responsible for the actual loss of farms. In a rural county in North Carolina, part of which was surveyed in 1924 and again in 1930, the property of 58 persons was advertised for tax sale in 1915, the total amount due being less than \$500. In 1925, 800 persons were similarly involved, and in 1929 about 1400 who owed \$52,630, or an average of \$37.60 each, allowed their property to go to tax sale. In this case, and in many others uncovered in the investigation, much of the property attracted no bidders and reverted to the local government.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture estimates that between March 15, 1925, and March 15, 1931, 109 of every 1000 farms in Montana were sold for taxes. In North Dakota, the number per thousand was 86; in South Dakota, 66; Virginia, 70; Kansas, 17. Nationally, the proportion, 1926-35, was 78.7 farms per 1000.

What this means in specific areas has been shown by a number of studies. In 17 counties in northern Wisconsin, said by the United States Department of Agriculture to be "illustrative of a widespread tendency in many parts of the United States," nearly one third of the land in one county was sold at tax sale in the single year 1927, more than 30 per cent in three others, and 20 per cent or more in twelve. In all, 2,600,000 acres were disposed of, 73 per cent of which had to be bought by the counties under a law that provided that tax certificates not otherwise purchased must be acquired by the county.

One of these counties was studied in 1921 and again in 1930 in the present investigation. In the first year the county was enthusiastically battling the stumps left by the lumbering interests. Settlers were pouring in, many of them foreign-born. Everything pointed to the development of a stable and reasonably prosperous agricultural county within a few years. In 1927 more than one fourth of the area of this county was put up at tax sales. In 1930 only 5 per cent of the land was in crops, 8 per cent in lumber, and the rest, except for village sites, railroad rights-of-way and the like, was idle.

The effect of such a situation on social institutions, schools and churches, and even on the local government, is, of course, adverse. Tax revenue obviously declines and tax supported activities suffer. Furthermore, where huge acreages have become tax delinquent, serious problems of public policy are involved. Should delinquent land be allowed to remain idle, and produce inferior species of trees? Should it be reforested, and if so, by what agency? Should still other farmers be allowed to occupy land that has failed to produce even its taxes? What policies should be adopted to maintain roads and schools for farmers who are still struggling on here and there, surrounded by large areas which no one wants and where no one lives? ²

Taxation problems deeply rooted. Recent taxation problems are not the product of the agricultural depression alone. The roots lie deeper, and one of the longest and most tenacious of these roots is the so-called general property tax. The bulk of the income for local and county government is raised by a tax assessed on the value of land and buildings. This tax is very ancient and was devised and worked well when the world was largely agricultural. It was not onerous when the nation was 90 per cent rural. But as wealth came to be more and more a matter of stocks, bonds, savings accounts, and other forms of less tangible and readily concealable property, non-

² Wisconsin now has a law permitting counties to exchange county-held land for privately owned land if such action will result in more advantageous location of isolated farm families.

concealable assets like land and buildings began to bear an increasingly disproportionate share of the tax burden. Moreover, the property tax cannot be shifted to the consumer as can taxes on coal, gas, long-distance telephone calls, and the like.¹ The retention of the present general property tax on the present basis long after the conditions that called it forth have changed is an interesting if not irritating example of the well-known lag between changing conditions and entrenched or traditional social practices.

Assessors inexperienced. Further difficulty lies in the fact that the property tax is inexpertly assessed by local officials who have had little or no training, and the result, naturally enough, is great variations and irregularities. Differences of over 100 per cent in per acre assessed valuations on nearly identical farms lying within the same township are not unusual. Every study has shown a tendency for the assessment on small properties to represent a higher proportion of full value than on large ones. Similarly, the poorer the land, the higher the ratio of assessed to true value. In poor land areas the reason for this is obvious. Government services are becoming increasingly standardized, at least, as to minimum requirements, and it costs more per family and in proportion to wealth to support them in a poor county than in a rich one. As we shall see later, the same problem confronts the church.

Expanded functions need more money. That the Government requires larger funds for operation now than a generation ago is obvious. School enrollments are much higher, their terms are longer, and children stay in school for a greater number of years. Better qualified teachers have been demanded and secured. All public services, including government services, cost more when population density is low. As the country is now organized, a multiplicity of units and small-scale operation is required. This multiplicity, a legacy from the period of pioneer agriculture and relative isolation, creates by itself a huge problem as will be seen in Chapter XXIV.

¹ In some states the problem is further complicated by assessing an added sum based on the potential value of possible sub-soil minerals.

State aid. Because of these and other aspects of the situation, there has arisen a demand for the support of a number of social utilities on a state-wide or federal basis. Roads are now recognized as a state and national obligation. New York State, rather than the county, has assumed responsibility for bridges. But children are also a national asset and there is an increasing demand for the state to assume a larger share of educational costs. In Delaware and North Carolina there are now state-wide systems of education with little or no local support.

The reason for this trend, which is discussed further in relation to education, in Chapter XVII, is made apparent by a typical case in a West North Central State. The poorest fifth of its counties had less than \$6000 of assessed value for each child of school age. The least wealthy of the top seventh of its counties had more than \$12,000.² Obviously, equality of educational opportunity is hardly possible if the costs are to be assessed against the smaller government units. Some sort of aid from without must be provided. We are assuming, of course, that equality of educational opportunity is a function of a democracy, and that the poorer areas needing help justify such aid both economically and socially, an assumption which raises questions about the social uses of land. This point will be discussed later.

As the 1930's proceeded, rural communities, like urban, began organized campaigns for lower taxes. Taxpayer leagues frequently secured drastic reductions. It is symptomatic of human behavior in such situations that the bulk of such effort was directed toward securing reductions by dispensing with services and reducing salaries. Little or no effort was made to secure economy through greater efficiency, such as the consolidation of offices and of small, adjacent municipalities. Nor was much attention paid to introducing strict budgeting and accounting, to strengthening the weaknesses in the assessment and the collection of property tax. Tax pronouncements by the Farm Bureau Federation have dealt largely with the Federal and State aspects of taxation.

² Figures for 1928-29.

SOCIAL USES OF LAND

Some of the matters discussed above, especially farm income, which is related in part to soil fertility, land tenure, and taxation, raise fundamental questions of public policy as to the use of the available agricultural land resources. Following the Civil War, the nation made its public domain available under the Homestead Law. But for thirty to forty years after the best of this land was settled there was no national policy for land utilization. Development was in private hands, and areas have been boomed and settlers have been exploited purely for profit, and in ways which sometimes created problems because the land was not adapted to the uses to which its promoters put it.¹ The matter gains urgency now because since the depression titles to millions of acres have reverted to the Government, whenever they were put up at tax sale and found no bidders. During the administration of President Hoover increasing attention began to be paid to this problem. The Roosevelt Administration has given it further consideration. Proposals have been made for the removal of population from poor land to more fertile areas, though it is emphasized that this will be done only to the extent that total production of food and fiber can be held stationary.

State policies. Prior to this proposal, two states, Wisconsin and New York, had formulated land policies beyond any previously attempted. They recognized that if certain land uses result continually in family poverty, in rural slums, in uneconomic costs for mediocre schools, roads and public services, a public danger or even a social menace is created. In Wisconsin land is being zoned, much as cities are, for particular purposes. Stranded families have been removed to better locations, and the state compensates the counties to some extent for areas converted into state forests.

Homesteading in the 1930's. Thus far, little of nation-wide scope has been done, although far-reaching plans are being

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children* (Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1929), for examples of both good and bad development; cf. especially pp. 31-40 and 138-54.

made. The work of the depression-born Citizens Conservation Corps in forestry is notable. The best known effort, however, to relocate population is in the so-called Resettlement communities, described earlier in the chapter. In these communities unemployed persons in units averaging about 100 families but sometimes as few as 25, are located on small tracts of several acres each near cities. The theory is that these people can raise enough to feed themselves, and that other wants can be met by securing employment in near-by cities. The projects are federally financed on long time, low interest-bearing loans. They offer, if there is sufficient wisdom in the central and local leadership, interesting possibilities for experimentation in efficient and economical methods of supplying necessary social services to rural communities. Indeed if this is not done the whole enterprise may fail should hard-pressed local rural governmental units be unable to provide, for instance, for the education of the children of settlers, who, in the nature of the case, are themselves almost devoid of resources.² If the resettlement centers succeed, attention must be given to building communities as well as houses. No new resettlement projects are now being organized.

The problem is now far wider than the communities set up as a depression measure by the Resettlement Administration. As a result of various programs in soil conservation and land utilization the Department of Agriculture has purchased several million acres of land and has more millions under option. This is sub-marginal land. Some of it is used to help farmers to shift from wheat to stock farming and to prevent over-grazing. Here the aims are agricultural adjustment and soil conservation. Other projects involve building dams for water conservation, reforestation, and the creation of recreational facilities. The lastnamed developments have meant the building of picnic shelters, bathhouses, bathing beaches, fireplaces, parking areas, park roads, docks, and similar facilities. Through

² In one non-governmental project in 1933, some 35 or 40 families with nearly 100 children of school age were moved to a small, weak township which had but a one-room school near this colony with a total capacity of 30 pupils, an enrollment of 15 in charge of one teacher.

construction of dams, several large lakes have been created, in part for the run-off of water and to provide the surrounding population with long-needed recreational facilities. These latter types of projects often involve removal of all or part of the existing population.

Wider implications. Any considerable effort to move population, however wise the plan may be theoretically, is bound to encounter a number of social and psychological impediments. There is first of all the attachment of the people to their own locality. They are used to it. They have, after all, eked out an existence. Their memories and experiences clothe a familiar scene with sentimental value. They may have small desire to begin life anew in strange surroundings, even under favorable conditions and auspices. Community ties are not easily sundered. Moreover, politicians may not welcome the removal of voters from their districts.

Land utilization schemes, then, have far broader consequences than these Resettlement communities. No longer is all usable non-industrial and non-residential land conceived of as potential farm land. It is being used more and more for recreational purposes, private and public, as for example, the national and state parks and the beginnings of county parks. Reforestation, not merely for commercial purposes, but to prevent erosion and for flood control, is another important use of land and one too long neglected in a country which is paying a heavy price for the planless destruction of its timber.² The problem of land utilization is enormous and any public policy in regard to land cannot ignore its broader social considerations and values.

Some recognition of these considerations is being given by the Program Planning Division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Its emerging program, discussed further in Chapter XXV, looks far into the future. It is taking into account land use in relation to human welfare, the needs of the

² In many countries timber-land is most carefully guarded. In Japan, for instance, no tree can be cut unless another is planted and not more than 5 per cent of a stand can be cut in any given year.

nation for food, fiber, wood, water, recreational spaces, population growth, and our standards of living. On the basis of these data, a program is to be proposed which should be carefully studied as it develops, especially in regard to its social implications. For there cannot be too much emphasis in all this program building upon the human aspects. If the land of our nation cannot provide adequate social as well as economic life for rural people, no land policy can succeed. It may even be that these desiderata can be supplied only by drastic steps in regulating the number of farmers. If so, plans must include provision elsewhere for those removed from the soil.

Admirable as this program is, it cannot dodge this issue, and if that be so, then the long-range program of agriculture must be but the first of a series of similar efforts. Industrial reorganization becomes involved, including occupational planning. For agriculture and rural life cannot come to full fruition in the national economy independent of all else.

In this chapter thus far it has been shown that our farms are gradually increasing in size, but that this trend conceals an increase in the number of small farms, compensated for by large increases among farms of over 500 acres. It has revealed that the values and income of farms, after gradually rising for some thirty years prior to 1920, suffered a drastic decline with the depression, and that accompanying the depression there was a significant increase in the proportion of our farms operated by tenants, a proportion which had also increased sharply under other stimuli early in the century. Finally, taxation was seen to be a complicating factor seriously affecting not only agriculture but the social utilities and arrangements of rural people.

The capacity of land for sustaining human life on a satisfactory community level and its value as a basis for taxation are closely related to another aspect of the rural economic scene replete with social implications; namely, credit. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Learn all you can about any local farm boards set up to supervise crop reduction under the Farm Act. What are the problems of these local boards and how are they being met?
2. If possible, get estimates from local officials of the amount of unpaid taxes on farms since 1930. Record these figures and explain what you have found out about them.
3. Conduct a class debate on the question, "Resolved: that corporation farming will benefit American agriculture and rural life."
4. What social problems are involved in situations of high tenancy?
5. What are the causes of tenancy?
6. Under what conditions if any, does it seem advisable to remain a farm tenant rather than to become a farm operator?
7. What changes in farm practice have taken place in your home community in the last generation? How were these changes brought about? Were they part of any well-defined social movement, local or national? Were they related to changes in transportation facilities, or to the growth of cities?

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CHAPTER XV

THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF AGRICULTURAL CREDIT AND CO-OPERATION

FURNISHING the farmer with both long and short-term credit has long been a major problem in the rural world. The cost of credit has become a primary concern of those who are seeking to raise the farmer's standard of living in all lands. In Korea, for instance, the average farmer pays from 30 to 36 per cent per annum for the money he must borrow. In China the ratios are about the same. In India the situation is even worse, rates of from 60 to 300 per cent being not unusual, although above average.

What this means can be shown from a few illustrations drawn from one country. In a group of 4400 families in Tozen, Korea, the average indebtedness was found to approximate the annual gross income per farm. In other communities interest alone equaled the total expense of farm operation or one eighth of the gross receipts from all income sources per family.¹ Interest rates of 24 to 36 per cent were common and in India they often reached 48 to 60 per cent.

FARM CREDIT IN THE UNITED STATES

The situation in the United States has never been as serious as in the Orient, but it has been, nevertheless, a perennial difficulty. The farmer felt that the banking system and credit machinery of the United States has never, since the days of Alexander Hamilton, taken agriculture sufficiently into account.

A store or an industry offers not only its property as a security, but, what is more important, its goods and products which can readily be converted into cash. Many types of farming, on

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Rural Korea*, p. 27 ff. New York and London, 1928.

the other hand, such as wheat, corn and hops, and cotton, have no steady source of income throughout the year. Their receipts are concentrated in a short period. If payments of interest fall behind, the creditor has only the farm as a security. Because this cannot be sold as readily as store goods, or a corporation bond listed on a stock exchange, it is said, therefore, that farm loans are "non-liquid."

As the nation grew older, however, farmers needed more credit. Free land through homesteading came to an end and, as we have seen, the price of land increased. The prospective farm owner had to borrow. Moreover, as agriculture became mechanized the farmer needed to purchase machinery which was usually so expensive that he could not pay cash for it. Hence the increased need for credit in addition to the perennial necessity of borrowing for current expenses when funds ran low between crops. The need was supplied by mortgage companies, insurance companies, and later by banks. Costs to the farmer frequently ranged from 8 to 12 per cent and there was constant agitation for lower charges.

The Federal Land Banks. Finally, in 1915, over bitter opposition, a Federal Credit Agency was set up called the Federal Land Bank. Its twelve regional banks lent to farmers through local associations of ten or more members. Capital was raised by selling bonds secured by mortgages on the farms of borrowers. The average interest charge was 5.6 per cent. Repayment could be made at the rate of 5 per cent a year. During the 1920's there was an average of 4600 of these local credit associations with an average unit membership of about 100. The ordinary loan was for a little over \$3000.² This system is quite generally credited with having equalized and reduced interest rates. It did not, however, eliminate other lenders from the field.

The rise of mortgage indebtedness. The following paragraphs describe in briefest detail the credit situation of the 1930's,

² In addition there was a smaller system, the original financing provided by the United States Treasury through the purchase of shares to be redeemed locally, called the Joint Stock Land Bank. Intermediate Credit Banks, designed to loan to farmers' co-operative organizations, were also set up.

but before examining the changes wrought by the depression it is important to glance at the increase in farm mortgage debt in the United States.

On owner-operated farms it amounted to 1.7 billion dollars in 1900, rising to 4 billions in 1920, to 4.5 billions in 1925, and as the deflation continued, dropping to 4.08 billions in 1930. The average indebtedness per farm jumped from about \$1700 in 1910 to \$3356 in 1920, and \$4004 in 1925, and then declined to slightly less than \$3600 in 1930. In other words, between 1920 and 1925 while the per acre value of farm real estate declined 25 per cent, the average loan per farm increased almost 20 per cent. Thus the value of the mortgaged farms, which was more than three times the debt in 1920, dropped to about two and one half times the debt by 1930. Meanwhile the proportion of owner-operated farms that were mortgaged increased from 37.2 to 42 per cent. If we add the debts upon tenant-operated farms, the amount is almost doubled, and short-time and floating indebtedness brings the total to between 10 and 12 billions. The mortgaged debt equaled about 7 to 8 per cent of the total internal debt of the United States in 1930.

Depression problems. The steady increase in land values from 1890 to 1920, already alluded to, made it relatively easy for the farmer to borrow since it gave lenders increasing confidence in the security of such loans. But with the rapid decline which began in 1921 the situation changed. Security was impaired. Many of these loans had been contracted when the dollar had a low purchasing power. As the price of agricultural commodities declined, even though the farmer maintained or expanded his production, it took an increasing proportion of his crops to meet mortgage payments and taxes. Many failed to do so, thus affecting the local country banks which held mortgages, so that in the 1920's more than 6000 failed, bringing a 2 billion dollar loss to over 7,000,000 depositors.

Increase of foreclosures. Naturally, foreclosures on farm property increased. Farm bankruptcies, which had been a rarity in the United States in the early 1900's, mounted. In

the year ending March 15, 1932, 13.3 of every 1000 farms suffered foreclosure, and in the ten years 1926-35 the equivalent of almost 22 per cent of all farms were foreclosed. When the tax sales already noted are added, the seriousness of the situation becomes even clearer. The United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimated in 1932 that 7 per cent of all farms were mortgaged at more than their depression values. In Minnesota the College of Agriculture study showed that the average foreclosure-sale netted only 4 per cent more than liabilities plus charges. Farms sold by the Federal Land Banks in the winter and spring of 1933-34 failed by a fraction of one per cent to cover the incumbrance. In other words, the debtor was wiped out.

In passing it may be pointed out that from the financial point of view, i.e., that of the security holder, this is by no means a bad record, hard as it was on the debtor. In these years the bonds of many of America's major corporations were selling at huge discounts. Those of important metropolitan real estate companies upon foreclosure very often involved the creditor in the loss of large proportions of his investment.

It must be remembered that when a farmer loses his farm he also loses his home, that increasing debt and interest payments are taken directly out of money available for family living unless income increased by the same amount and that when agricultural prices fall while payments on interest and principal of debts remain stationary or increase the standard of living falls. In few if any other businesses are economic and social considerations so intimately interwoven as in farming.

Federal action in the emergency. It is not surprising, therefore, that in many states agrarian unrest increased in 1932 and 1933. In many places there was organized resistance to sales, which were sometimes actually stopped. In other instances, ridiculously low bids were made by neighbors and other bidders were escorted from the sales.¹ Laws were discussed in some

¹ One such incident has been dramatized in a one-act play, *These Lean Years*, by Fred Eastman. Samuel French, New York, 1934. See also Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 40-44, for illustrations of resistance to foreclosure-sales and off-farm strikes.

states and passed in a few, declaring moratoria on farm mortgaged debt.

To meet this situation Congress reduced the interest rates on the loans in force through the Federal Land Banks, temporarily waived annual payments on the principal of outstanding loans, authorized additional loans, set up machinery for equitably adjusting and refinancing the indebtedness of hard-pressed farmers to save them from foreclosure.

Stabilizing land values. The scaling-down of the farmer's obligation in such cases represents the judgment of the Farm Credit Administration in regard to the *normal* value of the farm. The action of Congress in directing that Federal Land Bank loans be based on normal value has aroused interest. On this point the Land Bank Commissioner states that the intent was to base valuations on long-time conditions, to be governed neither by the extremely low figures to which the depression has carried the price of land, nor by such inflated valuations as developed in the land boom of 1919-20. It is hoped that this action will introduce a stabilizing factor into the values of farm property. If it succeeds in doing so, it may have important results in retarding both deflation and inflation.

Is farm credit legislation sound? This farm credit legislation goes beyond anything previously attempted. Since before the days of Shylock, when a debtor failed to meet the terms of his bond, the creditor could exact the penalty. Neither "acts of God," like drought, flood, or fire, nor wide fluctuations in prices and in the purchasing power of money made any difference if the creditor decided not to extend mercy. This legislation does not change the situation, but it does declare in effect that when an important industry like agriculture becomes so seriously involved as to be hampered in its functioning, and when as a result both the creditors and operators of that industry face serious losses, the situation becomes a matter of such wide concern that society, personified in Government, has a right to step in and offer remedies, even to the extent of suggesting that creditors share part of the losses.

There may be differences of opinion as to whether such legislation is either worth while or judicious. In this case the

response of both creditors and debtors to the facilities afforded by law indicates that public opinion in the main approves the measure. Field studies show that with few exceptions farmers, village tradesmen and a large majority of village bankers heartily approve the measure.¹ In the first two years of the Farm Credit Administration, the agency into which all federal agricultural agencies were consolidated, about one and three fourths billions were loaned to farmers, 90 per cent of which went to refinancing existing debts to banks, insurance companies and other creditors. At one time nearly three fourths of the farm-loan business of the nation was being cared for by the Federal Government and at present the Government holds \$2,836,900,000 of the total mortgage indebtedness of farms in the United States, of \$7,082,000,000, or about 40 per cent.² This is obviously a considerable step in the socialization of credit. When it is considered that twenty years ago there were no governmental agencies for this purpose, these figures show a remarkable change of attitude regarding governmental participation in the farm-loan business.

Interestingly enough Australia and New Zealand passed credit legislation closely resembling our own and a number of other countries in both Europe and Asia took legislative measures to assist indebted farmers. This is another evidence of the world-wide character of some rural problems.

This fact may be comforting in that it shows the problems faced by the United States are not due to special inefficiency on the part of our economy. But it is also disquieting both from the point of view of the farmers of the world and because the agricultural economists declare that the long-time world trend is for private credit to break down, for governmental credit and eventually controls to take its place and for the equity of the farmer in his holding to decline. This some believe is a threat to the stability of both economic and democratic institutions.

The present situation. It is estimated by the Farm Credit

¹ Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 33-36 for specific data and illustrations.

² Release of Farm Credit Administration of March 15, 1939.

Administration that in early 1939 one third of the farms of the United States were mortgaged. Assuming the number of farms has not changed substantially since the 1935 census, this works out to an average indebtedness of about \$3100, or \$500 less than in 1930. This figure and the decline in total mortgage debt of perhaps 12 to 15 per cent since 1930, represents some measure of the results both of foreclosures and of debt readjustments carried through under the farm credit legislation of 1933. In March, 1939, the United States Department of Agriculture¹ estimated that on January 1, 1938, five groups of leading lending agencies held farm real estate acquired on foreclosure, representing an investment of \$1,027,626,000 and totaling 28,000,000 acres, almost two thirds of which lay in the West North Central States. This represents something less than 200,000 farms, another measure of the depression difficulties. In 1937 for the first time since 1929 these holdings showed a reduction. Their eventual liquidation may affect land values if sold too rapidly and the necessary credit to finance purchasers will tend to increase farm mortgage debt.

Social implications of credit. Quite apart from the developments just described, it is important for social servants such as educators, clergymen, librarians, public health workers, and others to realize that the interest charges on borrowed money represent in part a judgment on the risk involved. Rates are relatively high in areas of sparse rainfall, short growing season, and in newly settled sections. Borrowing for schoolhouses, churches, community buildings and the like is controlled by the price of money in the community more than by the character of the institution doing the borrowing.

Foreclosures disrupt communities. The disturbed credit conditions in agricultural areas affect rural society in many ways. In sections where the ratio of foreclosures to the total number of farms was high, community life suffered serious dislocation. In case after case not speculators, but men who were tilling ancestral acres, whose forbears had built up a modest competence and security, whose methods were approved by the

¹ *The Agricultural Situation*, March, 1939, pp. 12-13.

conservative bankers, lawyers, and farmers of their communities, have been ejected from their land, with perhaps an old team of horses, a wagon, a cow or two, and a few sticks of furniture as their sole possessions.

It is obviously impossible to maintain the usual arrangements and relationships where home after home is so disrupted, where owners are reduced to the status of tenants, or where they remain on their land under a burden of crushing debt in the knowledge that they remain only on the sufferance of their creditors. Quite apart from the reaction of such a situation on community institutions and social organization, the strain demoralizes family life and neighborly activities. In the case of severe drought, such as in the summer of 1934, minor irritations are overemphasized and misunderstandings arise. Many farm papers carried special editorials warning against allowing such things to happen. The whole situation resulted in resistance to foreclosure sales by the hastily organized groups of farmers already mentioned. The significance of this and of the farmers' strikes of 1933 lies in the fact that it was the first time in our history that farmers resorted to direct action and to the strike techniques as developed by labor. Previous collective action by agrarian groups has been confined for the most part to the political field.

The situation is the worse because those who are lucky enough to start again as tenants are likely to deal no longer with a former farmer or his son but with the business representative of an insurance or finance company who knows nothing of local traditions and practices, and whose employers are interested in financial returns, not in developing individual farms or communities. This is natural and legal, but it involves, as does the whole situation, social losses from which it may take decades to recover, and social problems which will require the attention of education, social workers, economists and others for years to come.

Does the land give security? Behind the personal, human, and even community problems created by the disruption of credit arrangements by the depression lie broader questions. At the

very time when millions of urban people were fleeing from the cities to what they felt to be the security of the land, that sense of security and stability which agrarian people have cherished for ages the world over was being undermined. With mounting foreclosures and increasing tenancy, the problem of a national land utilization policy was sharpened, for, as President Roosevelt declared in 1934, "We cannot fail to act while hundreds of thousands of families live where there is no reasonable prospect of a living in the years to come." It is entirely possible that the matter of land utilization, already noted, will grow in importance in the future and that the policies worked out will have far-reaching results for our social structure.

One of the arguments for treating this matter as "especially a national problem" is based on the development here and there of corporation farms formed by insurance companies, banks and others who have taken over considerable tracts, which they are operating with paid hands and machinery. Where this has happened the family type of farm and community organization has been disrupted, village service stations where the farm families used to trade have suffered, and problems of industrial organization and employer-employee relationships have begun to arise. On the other hand government action in liberalizing farm-loan terms is an indication of acceptance of responsibility in situations of financial distress and emergency which may be roughly compared to the setting up of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation which aided banks, insurance companies, railroads and industries.

CO-OPERATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

The use of local associations of ten or more farmers as the local agencies of the Federal Land Bank was, of course, an extension of the co-operative principle to the credit field.

Even more interesting has been the recent development of credit unions. This movement is well known in India and Japan and to a lesser extent in China and Europe, as noted later. In the United States its growth dates from the depres-

sion. The members of a credit union make small payments, usually monthly, to its capital and lend the funds in small amounts at reasonable interest rates to members for approved purposes. Thirty-eight states have laws which permit the organization of credit unions. In 1934 a Federal Credit Union Act was passed which makes it possible for such an organization to be incorporated in any state. Over 3185 unions now have a federal charter and the number is increasing steadily.

All told, there are now over 7900 credit unions in the United States, not all of them rural, according to a press release of the Farm Credit Administration dated May 1, 1939. The average membership is 227, with savings by members of approximately \$10,000 or \$40 per member. The average loan is about \$82. There have been very few failures of credit unions and the per member loss in these cases was very small. It is significant that at a time of great economic and financial stress the co-operative features of credit unions have attracted such wide interest and support from people of small means.

But co-operation as practiced by farmers is far broader. It has been applied to marketing and buying and is a far-flung enterprise. Moreover, it is in essence social, based on mutual trust of the co-operators and is largely, though not exclusively, governed on the principle of one man one vote, regardless of the number of shares an individual may hold in a given co-operative enterprise. Most of the marketing co-operatives deal with one crop, such as citrus fruit, cheese, cotton, and the like. Any producer who cares to may join, but joining involves the obligation to market his crop through the co-operative organization, which acts as the sales agent for each member, pooling the products received and thus having more power in dealing with purchasers.

Development of the co-operative movement. The co-operative movement among farmers in the United States began soon after the Civil War in a time of disturbed conditions, new needs and problems arising out of post-war deflation. It was at the start, and for some decades, largely a neighborhood matter. A few farmers would combine in the manufacture of cheese, or a

community group would finance and manage its own wheat-elevator or creamery. With the coming of the twentieth century the movement gathered momentum. The first successful large co-operative, that of the citrus-fruit growers of California, gave promise of organizing a considerable number of farmers on the basis of a single crop and over a considerable area. The small local co-operatives were federated into large powerful organizations. By 1915 there were over 5400 co-operatives engaged in marketing and purchasing products with a volume of business exceeding \$635,000,000. During the World War and in the following years there was a remarkable expansion, with great campaigns and enthusiastic membership drives. Some of these co-operatives failed as a result of too hasty organization and an uninformed membership. The next forward step came under the Federal Farm Board, organized early in the Hoover Administration. The statistics of the movement are summarized as follows by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics:

Year	Number of Associations	Volume of Business	Memberships*
1915.	5,424	\$ 635,839,000	651,186
1925.	10,803	2,400,000,000	2,700,000
1930.	12,000	2,500,000,000	3,100,000
1934†	10,900	1,365,000,000	3,156,000
1938.	10,900	2,400,000,000	3,400,000

* Gross figures. It is generally thought that, correcting for duplications, about 2,000,000 are members of co-operatives, a majority of the farmers engaged in commercial production on any scale.

† Lowest year of depression.

Types of co-operatives. Many of these 12,000 co-operatives are still local organizations. Others are organized on two bases: (1) federations of locals through which the large organization keeps in touch with its membership, and (2) those organized from the top down, with no local agency. Contact between the member and the co-operative is direct but largely impersonal. Rural sociologists early pointed out that this was a dangerous procedure because it was in essence less democratic than the federation. More of this type than of the first have run into difficulties or failed. A few of them have constructed local organizations to meet this problem.

The significance of the table lies not so much in the membership figures as in the volume of business, which declined in dollars. It should be noted, however, that while the 1925 figures represent less than one fourth of the total volume of agricultural crops raised, including those consumed on the farm, the 1938 figures comprise upwards of two fifths of the total production. These fractions would be higher if based only on products sold commercially.

The volume of products handled by the co-operatives has gained between 40 and 50 per cent over the last decade. Gains have been especially striking in connection with co-operative purchasing of farm supplies and some consumers' goods. Total purchases through farm co-operatives in the year 1937-38 amounted to over \$440,000,000, practically triple the amount two years previously. That it will exceed half a billion in 1938-39 seems certain on the basis of quarterly statements. The proportion of co-operative sales to all purchases at retail among the farm population is far in excess of the urban ratio and practically equal to the proportion of co-operative to total sales now obtaining in England.

As in other matters, so there is wide variation in the importance of co-operative marketing in the various regions. More than half the volume of marketing business is reported from the Middle West. The Pacific States accounted for another sixth and the Middle Atlantic for one eleventh. No other region accounted for as much as 6 per cent.

Some advantages of co-operative marketing. Through co-operation, the farmer has sought to secure some of the middleman's profit for himself, to reduce marketing costs, to control the flow of non-perishable products to market and thus to avoid dumping, to create new markets for certain products both by research and by advertising, and to improve standards of production. Brand names have been adopted and products reaching market have been properly graded, thus protecting the consumer. In short, associated groups of farmers have sought the advantage and profits of the corporation through co-operation.

Opposition met. This growth has not been without great opposition. Co-operatives were fought in the courts, attacked by powerful financial institutions and charged with increasing the cost of living, and as interfering with legitimate private enterprise. Today some of the agencies, once opposed, are proclaiming co-operation as a panacea for the ills of agriculture, and are chiding the farmer for his too tardy acceptance of the principle. State and federal courts, moreover, have lately adopted a liberal attitude toward co-operatives.

Legislation has helped. Congress, like the states, has shown a benevolent attitude. Co-operatives have been exempted from federal anti-trust laws and from the federal income tax. In 1926 and 1929, Congress set up machinery to aid in their development and expansion, and loans were made available to them through governmental agencies in 1921, 1924 and 1929.

These legislative efforts have been consistent in their endeavor to stabilize production and marketing, to eliminate waste, increase credit resources, and promote educational programs. Such a benevolent attitude presages further legislative assistance in the advancement of the agricultural co-operative movement.¹ It is perhaps one reason why the record of the co-operatives is as good as it is.

Failures among co-operatives. Failures among co-operatives compare favorably with other business failures. Almost half of the co-operatives existing in 1930 were found by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture to be more than fifteen years old. Causes of failures and voluntary liquidations were chiefly friction among members, failure to educate or cultivate the members, over-expansion, insufficient capital, and too liberal dividend or credit policies. Unfair competition by commercial organizations, while frequently cited, is responsible for only 2 per cent of the failures.

¹ Cf. *Recent Social Trends in the United States* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1933), chapter by Clark and Douglas, on "Law and Legal Institutions"; Hanna, *The Law of Co-operative Marketing Associations* (1931); Hamilton, "Judicial Tolerance of Farmers' Co-operatives," 38 *Yale Law Journal* (New Haven, 1929), no. 936.

The co-operatives and the community. An indication of the status of the co-operative movement in terms of the local community is given by the survey of the 140 village communities alluded to again and again in this text. In 1936, 93 of these places had an average of 2.16 co-operatives each as against 120 with an average of 2.2 each in 1924. This was a loss of 62 or 23.6 per cent from the total of 263 co-operatives found in 1924. But against this there was a gain of 14.1 per cent in membership.

The explanations of this trend toward a smaller number of local co-operatives, but a larger aggregate and average membership, are three. A few of the weaker co-operatives were liquidated during the depression years, usually with little or no loss. There were a few local consolidations. But the chief explanation reflects an adaptation to changing conditions, specifically to greater ease of transportation. The "local" unit of the co-operative was changed from a social community to a county basis or to some other unit larger than a local trade area.

As would be expected from the national data already given, the number of purchasing and consumers' co-operatives increased, indeed by more than 50 per cent, and there was also an increase of 40 per cent in the number of co-operatives which both marketed members' products and sold farm supplies and some consumers' goods. The total volume of business for both types of co-operatives in 1935-36 was \$113,000 per organization, which exceeded tenfold the volume of the average mercantile establishment in the 140 communities in the same year.

Consumer co-operation growing rapidly. Consumer co-operation has been growing by leaps and bounds in the United States since the Great Depression began and in this growth rural America has been leading. There are now a large number of central or regional wholesales. In some states the co-operatives have entered into the processing field. They own a number of refineries and have begun shipments of petroleum products to co-operatives in Europe. They have expanded their insurance activities from the field of fire risks, which farmers first entered in the East almost two centuries ago and where the co-operatives have over eleven billion dollars of insurance in force

at rates far lower than the commercial companies, to automobile, accident and life insurance. The Ohio Farm Bureau has been especially active in these developments. The business of the co-operatives in all these lines has been increasing rapidly, even in the worst of the depression. In several of the Mid-Western States public schools now teach both consumer and marketing co-operation.¹

SOME CASE ILLUSTRATIONS

Many of the co-operatives that purchased supplies and goods for resale to members had greatly increased their business. Typical of these was a concern called Farmers, Incorporated, in a medium-sized Virginia village. Half of the 500 farmers in the community belong to this organization. In the inter-survey period, 1924-30, the business increased about 50 per cent to total nearly \$170,000 annually. By 1935 there were 400 members and consumer business alone had increased to \$244,000. Since its founding in 1919, the dividends to member-stockholders had more than equaled the stock investment. Consumer co-operation among farmers is growing nationally and significantly.

The case of Rockwell, Iowa. Behind each unit of the statistics assembled finally in this chapter on co-operatives in local communities lies a story of agitation, leadership, education, of action, and often of struggle. A glimpse of what co-operation means in these terms is given in an account of the oldest grain co-operative in Iowa,² written by one connected with it as member and officer for thirty years.

In Rockwell, Iowa, by 1889 there was evidence that grain buyers were acting in unison and not competitively, thus holding down the price paid the farmers. There happened to be in the community two men of energy with some experience elsewhere with co-operation. After ceaseless agitation they finally gathered in a granary a group that, after much discus-

¹ Cf. the publication, *Cooperation*, Cooperative League of America, Chicago, and its weekly news release for up-to-the-minute news of the movement.

² Holman, Reuben A., *Forty Years of Co-operation*. Rockwell, Iowa, Farmers Elevator, 1931.

sion in the flickering light of a lantern, decided to form a co-operative elevator society.

The business men of the town were confident that the step would mean ruin for the community, and the grain trade fought the enterprise by offering higher prices to sellers. This infant co-operative, however, showed from the first the sagacity which has made for its success for more than two score years. It was democratically organized. Any farmer with ten dollars for a share of stock could join and no matter how many shares he held he cast but one vote. Competition from the grain trade was met by requiring members to pay the usual commission to the co-operative even when selling to a private elevator, upon pain of losing their other privileges in the society.

These other privileges soon became important, for the society began to handle machinery and then lumber and gave its own members discounts on such business. In ten years this ridiculed co-operative, that had begun business with barely \$1000 capital, showed a business volume of over \$300,000 a year, which, in turn, was doubled within another half decade.

Then a new threat arose. Efforts were made to shut off the urban outlet for co-operative marketed grain, but some thirty similar societies that had sprung up, following Rockwell's example, combined in a state co-operative association and were powerful enough to overcome this danger.

In Rockwell itself hogs and livestock were added to the marketing activities and coal, shoes and clothing to the products purchased for the community. By the end of forty years — that is, 1929 — the society had paid individuals 68 times the original investment. Since then, under a new charter, cash dividends have been limited to 5 per cent annually and other profits have been distributed on a pro rata patronage basis.

There have been several factors contributing to the success of this enterprise. The management has been almost from the start in the hands of one family, father and sons, men of

integrity who refused to be swayed by offers of positions or profits from the grain trade. Other leadership has also been continuous. There have been but four presidents and two secretaries in the more than forty years of its history. These leaders, as Holman shows in his delightfully simple and human history, have been men of fundamental integrity, and again and again in times of crisis their appeal to essential moral principles carried the day. Scripture was often quoted in their meetings. Finally the co-operative has been a stabilizing influence in the community itself, which has seemed to suffer less from migration than many and which has built up a co-operative spirit in many of its other relationships.

Agricultural co-operation elsewhere. Co-operation is strongly rooted among farmers in most of the world. It has perhaps reached its peak in Scandinavia and Czechoslovakia. It has spread rapidly in Canada, the situation in Nova Scotia being especially interesting. As long ago as 1913, Woodrow Wilson sent large official deputations to Europe to study the co-operative movement among farmers. Japan, with a million fewer farmers than the United States, has 14,000 rural co-operatives including credit unions. All of these are closely supervised by the Government. The movement is growing also in Korea, where some results of great social significance have been achieved.¹ India has more than 10,000 organizations. In this country co-operative credit unions have had the greatest development. Co-operation has begun to grow also in China, where 30,000 organizations were reported in 1939.

Attitudes toward co-operation. While the success of farmer co-operatives has been considerable, the progress of the movement is, according to surveys by Dr. Theodore Manny, of the Office of Population and Rural Life Studies of the United States Department of Agriculture, conditioned by a number of factors, largely social in character. He found that intrenched habits, especially individualism, hindered the movement in local communities. In some instances, farmers will sabotage their own organization if they think it to their immediate

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Rural Korea*, pp. 37-38. New York and London, 1928.

profit; this usually happens, however, only when the co-operative has not sufficiently educated its members as to its objectives, methods, and ideals. The co-operatives are more successful in enlisting the better educated, the more experienced, wealthier farmers than the others, and farm owners will join more readily than tenants. Tenants especially hesitate to subscribe to its stock, since they do not know how long they will reside in a community. Sometimes also their landlords oppose such a step. In the main co-operators belong to more organizations like churches, farm bureaus, lodges, and have a higher standard of living, more conveniences and more equipment than non-co-operators.¹ These facts in themselves suggest some of the obstacles the co-operative must overcome in order to progress. Numerous studies seem to show that the anti-co-operation attitudes of many farmers grow out of ignorance concerning what co-operation is and impatience with mistakes, coupled with the failure of some of the co-operatives to consider the sociological aspects of their problem and to use their locals as social as well as economic groups.²

Quite apart from these phenomena, co-operatives, wherever they are local organizations or units, provide a mutual interest and face-to-face contacts. The co-operative at Rockwell, Iowa, just described, was not a social organization in the strict sense of the term, but no one can read the history of its forty years without realizing how it has woven itself into the warp and woof of community life. Through it, leadership was developed, class distinctions broken down, and mutual trust and democratic processes encouraged. These beneficial results have appeared again and again.

Nationally and locally the co-operative movement is a social

¹ Cf. Manny, *Some Ohio Trends in Membership Relations, Some Social Factors in Membership Relations* (United States Department of Agriculture, 1929 and 1930); and Howell, *The Relation of Economic, Social and Educational Advancement of Farmers to Their Membership in Organizations* (i.e., Cotton Growers' Associations) (Stillwater: Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1929).

² These observations are based on field-work reports and newspaper clippings secured in a number of the 140 villages where the survey was fortunately in process during the annual meeting or annual membership drive of a local co-operative or its overhead organization.

as well as an economic force, and it is significant that despite their reputed individualism one third of the American farmers and a majority of those producing commercially, have joined one or more co-operative enterprises. Co-operation is not a panacea for the ills of agriculture; it is a definite help in any situation. It is an association of individuals who combine their capital and work power in a self-help organization which also has social tasks and aims, especially to improve the standard of living through lowering costs and increasing returns. Co-operatives are social groups, and, though instruments of economic progress, they tend to help integrate the communities or groups they serve. They work within the existing framework of society and its regulations *for* their members, not *against* anyone. The individual by his voluntary connection multiplies his own powers by association with a like-minded group.

These last two chapters have discussed in briefest form some of the more important aspects of the economic life of American agriculture and agriculturists. Those selected are peculiarly important because of their social implications. It is upon these implications that emphasis must be placed, for treating problems of credit, taxation, farm tenancy and the like without regard to individuals and human arrangements is a sterile procedure.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Have the Farm Credit Administration and the 1933 laws in relief of debtors aided farmers in your community or county? How?
2. Does the farmer need a different type of credit arrangement than the urban business man? Defend your opinion.
3. Is the Federal Farm Credit Administration socialistic? Defend your opinion.
4. Go to the local town or county records of farm foreclosures since 1920. Record your findings and explain them in terms of what you know about the American farm situation. What became of the families affected?
5. Find out the proportion of farmers who belong to farm co-operatives in your county.
6. What values has the Danish co-operative movement for the United States?
7. Contrast the co-operation principle with the individual sales principle and the private corporate principle of merchandising farm or other

products. (This discussion topic can be arranged in the form of a three-cornered debate by members of the class.)

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PART IV
RURAL SOCIETY: ITS FUNCTIONS AND
INSTITUTIONS

CHAPTER XVI

STANDARDS OF LIVING AND THE HOME

SOME writers begin their study of society with the great social institutions such as home, school, church, or government. These institutions seem so tangible and so permanent that they challenge attention at the outset. This procedure, however, seems to be "putting the cart before the horse," as the old agricultural adage expresses it, for it should be quite clear from the preceding discussion that social institutions spring from group experiences and backgrounds and from the desires and traditions of people. They are the results of evolution and change, since to survive, institutions must constantly make adjustments.

In introducing the social institutions of rural society, it should be emphasized at once that the house is not the home, the school is not the building, nor is the church the building with the steeple. The terms and the ideas for which they stand are easily confused. An institution is the more or less regular way a group does things. Habit and custom are important, since people tend to repeat methods of accomplishing their ends until the habit becomes definitely established. Such ways and methods are finally given the sanction of society. They may be society's plan for keeping certain groups in line with accepted social standards.

The school, for example, is the whole social arrangement of teachers and pupils, teachers and parents, and pupils and parents. It has its curriculum, its community relations, and its public policy. The school building is only an external evidence of internal activity. Similarly, the home with its ways of living, which is the subject of the present chapter, is something vastly more than a house. This truth was evidently in the mind of the popular writer who said, "It takes a heap o' livin' to make a place a home."

THE RURAL HOME AS SOCIAL INSTITUTION AND
CONSUMER CENTER

Characteristics of the rural family group and its chief occupation, farming, have been discussed in other chapters. It is the purpose of this chapter to study the family's ways of living. Such institutional forms of behavior have an internal sphere in the home and an external phase in the community. Society has never given the family group an entirely free hand in its own internal ways of living. Standards of health, honesty, morality, and many other forms of conduct have been prescribed. Whether internally or externally conditioned, the home with its standards of living is a social institution of primary importance.

Standards of living as a component part of this institution, the home, are themselves social forms of behavior embracing not only consumption of the economic goods — food, clothing and shelter — but also the consumption or use of the wide range of non-material elements including those spiritual, aesthetic, and social amenities which go to make up ways of living. These ways of living in the home can be observed or studied through actual budgetary expenditures, through socio-economic status as reflected in the possession of cultural goods or household conveniences, and in other forms of social behavior such as the participation in social groups or the use of time for recreation, education, religion, or other activities.

Broadly considered, consumption means the converting of gross profits into goods and services for human joy and living. The consuming takes place through the home, and the nature of the consumption is defined through the standards of living. In short, the rural home so conceived is as definitely a consuming institution as the farm is a producing institution, and together they become a mode of living quite as much as a means of livelihood.

"Socially desirable" standards, result of social processes. Standards of living from this focus of the home are obviously group products. They arise out of social experience, and what

is finally considered necessary or proper — that is, “desirable” — emerges as regular and recognized. This is the social process of building up a social institution. To be sure, different families have different ways, and these ways are undergoing constant change and adjustment, but this is the dictum of society.

In rural society where the family group is so important, its ways of living are subjects of vital interest. Through studies of living, some of which will be described later in the chapter, it is possible to observe some of the changes and readjustments going on in the home and also to understand more fully the social processes involved. One may think of the matter as a game of choosing: so much food as compared with so much shelter, or so much recreation, in order to have the sort of home life one wants. This proportioning of the factors of consumption becomes a very complicated affair, and its analysis soon leads one into many questions which cannot be considered here. What are wants? What conditions them? Why do they differ for different people? These are problems with which social psychologists must wrestle.

Some of the results of the proportioning, however, can be seen from the studies. For example, it was found that for farm families within the same state, food costs ranged from 20 to 50 per cent of total expenditures. The explanation does not lie entirely in the amount of income available, but leads back to social customs, to size of family, to values placed upon food as compared with education or religion. The matter of valuing and choosing is one of the most fundamental in human relations. Professor Cooley suggests that all psychical life is in some sense a choosing.¹ He declares, “a system of values is a system of practical ideas or motives to behavior.”² Behind the whole valuation process, therefore, is this effort of human beings to continue life and to work out their interests in a changing world.

The consumer emphasis in modern life. Thus the rural home

¹ Cooley, Charles H., *Human Nature and the Social Order*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1902.

² Cooley, Charles H., *The Social Process*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1925.

and its standards of living are seen to be closely related to other aspects of rural society and to the "great society" beyond. Experiences during depression years have given practical demonstration of the importance of this consumption emphasis.

Consumption, according to Professor Gide, University of Paris, is the final goal or "consummation" of the whole economic process. He says, "The domain of consumption is infinitely rich and as yet half explored; it is from here probably that economic science will one day start anew."¹ Despite this strong statement, he and many other political economists develop their system of economic thought around the concept of production. In fact, as stated elsewhere, Americans have become well schooled in the production theory of economics, a theory born when recurring famines and other shortages of uncounted centuries pointed to the need for supplying sufficient food and shelter for mankind.² In early American life it fitted in with the whole pioneering spirit to which reference has been made. Settlers sought to exploit and subdue the natural resources and to make them produce. There were always hungry mouths to feed in both country and city. The only problem was to produce sufficient quantities; the market seemed always to be calling for more. The government later, through extension service, urged farmers to increase per acre yields through use of more science and better technology. In recent decades such technology has multiplied many forms of production so that now that which was apparently impossible has happened. Production has outstripped consumption and finds itself caught in the web of a theory which never envisaged such a possibility. Hunger and want are still pressing their claims, but now in a land of plenty.

Rural people are directly concerned with consumption from a second angle. Consumption habits, which in many particu-

¹ Gide, Charles, *Political Economy*. Authorized Translation from the third edition, 1913, of the *Cours d'Economie Politique*. D. C. Heath & Co., New York.

² Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1933.

lars have changed but little for centuries, can now be altered or even revolutionized in a few months. Production, then, cannot be regarded for its own sake, but for consumers' needs and wants, and consumption habits must be studied and even forecast. The science of consumption should be built up by students of society rather than by sales managers.

Finally, from the standpoint of public policy, consumption includes various uses to which wealth is put. It must be admitted that more than once wealth has been amassed where it is not of maximum social usefulness. The question has been seriously raised as to whether consumption, conditioning as it does so many phases of life, is not the next area to which government and private agencies need to turn their attention.

Dr. Galpin emphasizes the place of consumption in agriculture and rural life when he says: "The farmer's problem is far from being solely a problem of price for farm products and profits of agriculture. It is a problem also of consumption goods, and for the college to leave this problem untouched and unsolved is to invite a situation in agriculture in which farmers know how to make profits as farmers, but not how to spend their profits as consumers. Such an agriculture is neither stable nor prosperous nor well paid."¹

Robert Lynd, after an extended study of "The People as Consumers" for the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, concludes his report with the two following significant sentences: "The primary concern is whether the government is prepared to give to the spending of the national income the same degree of concern that it at present bestows upon the earning of that income. Such coherent leadership is needed if schools and other agencies are to educate the consumer in the practice of the fine art of spending money."²

Importance of living recognized by rural groups. The practical

¹ Galpin, C. J., "Spending the Dollar Wisely in Home and Community." Address at Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Association of Land Grant Colleges, Washington, D.C., 1924.

² *Recent Social Trends*, vol. II, p. 911. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1933.

implications of the consumption emphasis and of the necessity for recognizing standards of "desirable" ways of living are being increasingly appreciated by farm people themselves. There was a time when certain groups of families chose to delay much home consumption until the farm was paid for, or until "it could be afforded." Private property in land was a "motive for behavior," driving the pioneer westward, as was noted in the chapter on the rural family. The old motto of scarcity economy was, "You can't have your cake and eat it." More recently the living side of the farm has risen to a new recognition. The modernized saying is, "You can't keep your cake unless you eat it," which suggests simply that profits from farming should be converted into standards of living for home and for community. To use an agricultural metaphor, profits should be "plowed back" into the soil of family and community life, rather than into the physical soil simply to induce more production.¹

In states as widely separated as South Dakota and Connecticut, farmers and their wives have met to discuss ways and means for making their farms produce what they insisted was an essential standard of living. Ideals in ways of living thus become motives for reorganizing the farming enterprise. The South Dakota group in its report says: "Such conferences represent a practical and constructive effort on the part of those participating, to study their own problems on a business basis and provide sufficient income to meet the standards of living requirements deemed essential by the family."²

A "landmark" in the recognition of the rising importance of farming as a mode of life was the thirteenth annual meeting of the American Country Life Association in 1930. Its conference topic was "Rural Standards of Living." Statesmen, agricultural experts, and community leaders, lay and profes-

¹ For statement of this point of view, see chapter v by H. C. Taylor in *Farm Income and Farm Life*, edited by Dwight Sanderson. University of Chicago Press, 1927.

² Report of Codington County Farm and Home Economics Conference, Watertown, South Dakota, 1930.

sional alike, urged the importance of family living in agrarian policy. They were not in agreement regarding the best ways for accomplishing the desired ends, but of the central importance of the task there was no question.¹

Necessity for protecting standards of living has been recognized by agricultural leaders. In the earlier days there was discussion of "eliminating the marginal producers" and now the dangers attendant upon sacrificing accepted standards of living by "marginal consumers" have been voiced. Probably as striking a statement of this as can readily be found is that in a discussion of "success" in farming by two English writers. They say:

But ultimately there is no general success which is not measurable in human values, and most of the success in farming can eventually be measured by the standard of living obtainable and enjoyed by the family. This is not a plea for ostentation, for real standards of living are not to be measured by outside show....

Although the possibilities of the standard of living for individual families over the whole group are largely determined by the common standard of living, this imposes the general limitations on the competition for the requirements of production, especially land and labor, but it also has a great influence on the conditions under which capital is accumulated or obtained. Thus the individual who is willing to sacrifice the accepted standard of living in the competition for either, is a danger to his neighbor.²

Concern of government in rural standards of living. Various agencies of government have "stepped into" the rural home and influenced its living in the last decade. Many of the governmental programs are discussed elsewhere and need emphasis at this point only as evidence of the definite concern of society regarding the rural living functions of the home.

¹ For a prospective and a brief review of the conference, see Circular 241, *Standards of Living*, September, 1930, and Circular 247, *Better Living in Home and Community*, July, 1931, by E. L. Kirkpatrick. Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

² Ashby, A. W., and Howell, J. P., "Success in Farming; Its Nature and Determination," *Journal of Surveyor's Institution*, 1926. Reprinted in *Rural Standards of Living, a Selected Bibliography*. Agricultural Economics Bibliography no. 32, August, 1930. Mimeographed. United States Department of Agriculture.

One way in which the government affects living is through assuming more and more of the early functions of the home, such as education, health, and recreation. Another important means of helping consumers is standardization, labeling and sumptuary legislation, and the enforcement of various food and drug acts.

More recently governmental agencies have tried to work out minimum budgets, particularly for food. The value of these budgets has been questioned, but they have actually been used in planning for marginal family groups such as relief families.¹ The Works Progress Administration in 1935 established minimum standards for various commodities but found that 18 per cent of the American families were below the so-called "emergency" level and that 40 per cent were below the "maintenance" scale.

The Federal Housing Authority and the Rural Electrification Administration have undertaken large programs for the improvement of standards of living through better housing and household conveniences. The significance of these programs for the present discussion is the recognition from the standpoint of public policy and interest that there are certain levels of living below which rural families should not be allowed to go. With such extreme reductions comes the danger to public health and the burden of poor relief, which will be emphasized in the chapter on public health and welfare. It is likewise recognized that standards of living of rural families have a real relation to public policies for land use, credit, and taxation, topics which have been explored in other chapters.

STUDIES OF STANDARDS OF LIVING

Although detailed studies of standards of living in the rural home are of comparatively recent date in this country, knowl-

¹ Hoyt, Elizabeth Ellis, *Consumption in Our Society*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1938. Stiebeling, Hazel K., and Ward, Medora, *Diets for Four Levels of Nutritive Content and Cost*, United States Department of Agriculture, Circular 296, Washington, 1933. Stecker, M. L., *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living in March, 1935, in 59 Cities*. Research Monograph 12, Public Works Administration, Washington, 1937.

edge concerning living conditions in general has grown through a series of systematic studies, mostly of urban laborers, dating back at least to the comparisons made by Gregory King for the years 1688 and 1699 for England, France, and Holland. Since that time hundreds of studies have been made. The methods employed have varied considerably, and no one of them singly deserves credit for providing complete help. There are, however, students whose contributions have proved particularly useful as a means of understanding the standards of living in the rural homes of America.

Studies of standards of living become a means or a "tool" for a better understanding, not only of the rural home, but of society itself. Budgets of income, expenditures, use of time or energy, have importance in and of themselves, but they have wider usefulness as a means of studying family organization, discovering social classes, and observing the interaction of family groups with other groups and with the institutions in society.

The Le Play case studies. As a professor in Paris, Le Play started his investigations of family living in about 1830, and for half a century carried on his studies in practically every country of Europe. He would arrange to live with families which he selected as representative of certain types and he would stay long enough to secure sufficient information to write a whole monograph, that is, a complete case analysis of the family.¹

Le Play was concerned with the problems arising out of industrialization in the nineteenth century. It was evident to him that there was a close connection between the consumption habits of families and the social policy of a nation. In times of prosperity, if habits of waste and unwarranted expansion of standards of living were allowed, there was sure to be a reaction which would end in suffering. Society should, therefore, in-

¹ The reports are published in a series of volumes called *Les Ouvriers Européens* and *Les Ouvriers des deux Mondes* (1856-1930). The present summary of the early studies is adapted from interpretations made by Carle C. Zimmerman, "Development of Research in Family Living," Scope and Method Monograph; *Research in Family Living*, Social Science Research Council, J. D. Black, editor, pp. 48-56; and "Family Budget as Tool for Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. xxiii, p. 901, May, 1928.

fluence families to prepare for the rainy day rather than to hasten its coming. He pointed out that if society's leaders were willing and prompt to act, much suffering caused by wars, industrial crises and famine could be avoided, and the consequent lowering of standards of living and the disruption of the social classes averted. He made the family his unit for thinking and for studying. Emphasis was placed on the mores, habits, and institutions which preserve the physical as well as the mental and social well-being of the family.

As was noted in the early chapter on the rural family, Le Play placed a good deal of stress upon the sentimental attachments which exist between the family group and its homestead or its "hearth," as he called it. Therefore, it is not strange that he should seek to analyze the ways of living of the family. He maintained that he who makes a complete analysis of the factors influencing the income and expenditures of a family, possesses a complete knowledge of that family. By the use of this case-study method he and his followers made classifications of societies according to their types of family organization, and gave explanations of the processes and changes in the society itself. The home, with its ways of living considered as a social institution, was the starting point for Le Play in his study of society.

The Engel statistical studies. In contrast with Le Play, Engel put his emphasis upon the accumulation of data regarding many families. His was a statistical study of what might be termed "mass" consumption. He used some of the original material gathered by Le Play and others, and also the studies of wage-earners in Belgium in 1886 and 1891. By statistical analysis he was able to show relationships between the distribution of the items of the budget and the rise of the family in the social scale. His statements of these relationships have come to be known as "Engel's Laws" of consumption. The statements took two forms. The first, which has received much the less attention but which has significance for the student of society, was that the importance of food in a budget was the best single index of the social position of the family.

The second was that an increase in income was associated with declining proportions of the budget spent for food, with about the same proportions spent for clothing, rent, fuel, and light, and with increasing proportions for education, health, recreation and amusements.

Although the relationships suggested by Engel have been found in general to hold true for present wage-earner families, as well as for rural laborers and salaried people, some revisions and modifications have been made on the basis of more recent studies in this country.¹

The influence of Engel's type of analysis has been direct in both rural and urban studies of standards of living. The method affords an opportunity for observing the changing behavior of families as they move up and down the income scale, and also for making limited comparisons between rural and urban families. It does not give the chance, however, for relating the home as an institution to its own immediate social environment. Therefore, both the Engel and the Le Play method can be used to very good advantage as complements to each other.

American farm family studies. Studies of farm families in America were much later in starting than those of wage-earners and low-salaried groups, but once under way they increased rapidly. Among the early contributions were the field studies of Warren in 1909, of Funk in 1913, and the writings of men like Galpin. These publications and the series of studies which followed have provided background knowledge regarding ways of living in American rural homes, especially farm homes.

One of the significant field surveys was a project of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, directed by E. L. Kirkpatrick. In this study, data were collected from 2886 white farm families in 11 states, for a one-year period during 1922-24. The results secured were believed to represent general conditions for the country as a whole. Although no other nation-wide surveys were immediately under-

¹ United States Public Health Service Report 35, no. 48, United States Treasury Department, 1920.

taken, agricultural colleges co-operating with the United States Department of Agriculture have made a great many local studies which contributed both to research method and to an understanding of how farm families live.

In 1935, recognizing the importance of greater knowledge about family living, the Department of Agriculture published a lengthy analysis of the findings and methods of nearly 1500 studies which had been made in the United States and in other countries.¹ The report concludes, however, "... there has never been a comprehensive study of the living of all groups of the population..." Neither has there been "... a study of farm family living which included enough communities to give an adequate picture of the level of living of all the important farm groups in this country."

The recognition of this need led to the planning of a comprehensive study of consumption and living conditions in farm, village, and city families by the National Resources Committee, the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor, in co-operation with the Central Statistical Board and the Works Progress Administration. Schedules were collected covering a one-year period from July, 1935, to June, 1936. Included in the survey were 66 farm counties, 140 villages, 29 cities, 14 medium-sized cities, and 6 large cities, all selected to represent various cultural and economic groups of the country.

Studies of the ways in which rural people spend their time also afford a clue to their standards of living. The use of time reflects the value attached to this or that form of activity. Such studies offer interesting insight into some of the traditional attitudes toward recreation, for example.²

¹ Zimmerman, Carle C., *Consumption and Standards of Living*. D. Van Nostrand, New York, 1936; Williams, Faith M., and Zimmerman, Carle C., *Studies of Family Living in the United States and Other Countries*. Miscellaneous publication no. 223, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, 1935.

² Frayser, Mary E., *Use of Leisure in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*. Bulletin 263, Clemson Agricultural College Experiment Station, 1930. Wilson, Maud, *Use of Time by Oregon Homemakers*. Bulletin 256, Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station, 1929. Rankin, J. O., *Use of Time in Farm Homes*. Bulletin 230, Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station, 1928.

Finally, the realistic portrayals of rural life through the novel and drama must not be overlooked. Only by making use of all available sources can we come to know how farm people live and what factors influence their ways of living.

WAYS OF LIVING IN THE RURAL HOME

Generalized statements about the ways of living in American rural homes are difficult when differences from region to region and variations among groups of families are observed. There are differences, for example, by race, nationality, tenure status, size of family, age of children, income, and so on. Nevertheless some general impressions can be secured and some basis for comparisons with local studies or with budgets of individual families can be had by presenting summaries of concrete studies.

Accordingly, the remainder of this chapter is divided into two sections. The first describes ways of living in various regions and compares farm, rural non-farm, with village and city, together with brief descriptions of farm and village housing conditions and farm-household conveniences. The second section discusses the influence of various factors upon ways of living.

Family living compared by regions. That there are differences in the ways of living in various regions is clearly shown by reports of local studies. Regional differences are also suggested by income discrepancies shown in the nation-wide study of the distribution of consumer incomes. An examination of the table reveals the relatively lower status of the South, the Mountain, and the Plains regions.

The families in New England, according to this comparison, with a mean average income of \$1810 are slightly better off — in terms of income — than the families of other regions. The North Central and the Pacific regions come next in order with mean averages of \$1786 and \$1775 respectively, while in the South the mean is \$1326. Differences in income measured in dollars may not represent the same differences in standards of living. For example, in the South there may be less need

TABLE 53. AVERAGE INCOMES OF FAMILIES IN FIVE GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS
BASED ON SAMPLE DATA, 1935-36

Geographic Region	Average Income per Family			
	Median		Mean	
	All Families	Non-Relief Families*	All Families	Non-Relief Families*
New England	\$1230	\$1365	\$1810	\$2011
North Central.....	1260	1410	1786	1973
South.....	905	985	1326	1431
Mountain and Plains... ..	1040	1220	1363	1537
Pacific.. . . .	1335	1485	1775	1937

* The non-relief group excludes all families receiving any direct or work relief (however little) at any time during year.

Source: National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in United States*, Washington, 1938.

for spending money for fuel, heavy clothing, or in some areas, rent.

Regional variations in the distribution of expenditures among farm families discovered in an earlier study are shown in the chart on page 399. Selected farm families in New England, Southern, and North Central States are compared for the usual budget items of food, clothing, shelter, and advancement.

The total value of all goods used by New England families was highest, although the average size of their families was lowest; their household was equal in size to the others. The high value of food in terms of dollars was doubtless due, at least in part, to higher prices reported for many different kinds of foods, both those purchased and those furnished by the farm, these prices being dependent upon proximity to the larger cities. In proportion to total expenditures, however, the Southern families led with 44.6 per cent, as the chart indicates. Actually, there is a surprising uniformity in the total value of goods used and in the proportioning among the five classes or items.

One significant way of living which distinguishes most farm families from other families is their dependence upon the farm itself, especially for much of their food. Village families may have gardens, but, as was emphasized in the chapter on the rural family, the farm family is very closely related to its farm. Much of its life flows directly from the life of the farm. This is

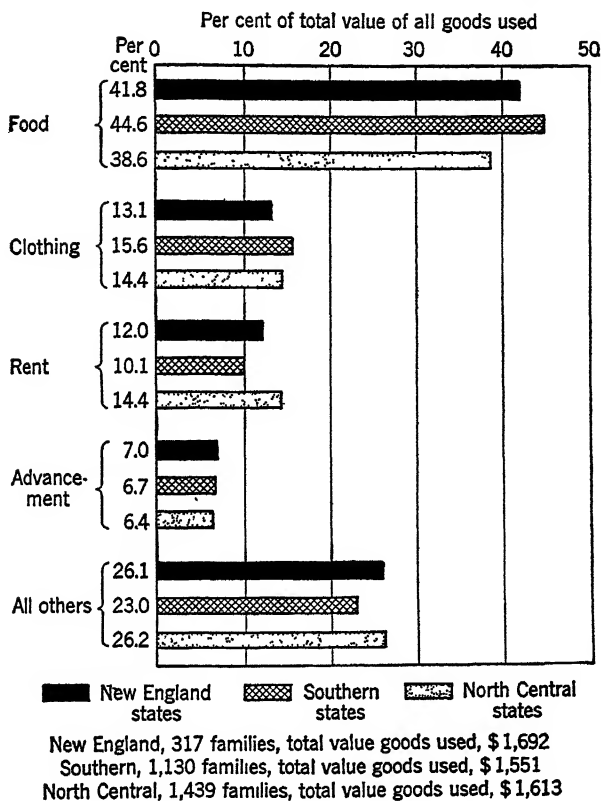


FIG. 39. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE PRINCIPAL GROUPS OF GOODS OF THE AVERAGE VALUE OF ALL GOODS USED PER FAMILY DURING ONE YEAR — FARM HOMES OF SELECTED LOCALITIES IN NEW ENGLAND, SOUTHERN, AND NORTH CENTRAL STATES, 1922-1924

Source: Kirkpatrick, E. L., *The Farmer's Standard of Living*, Department Bulletin 1466, United States Department of Agriculture, November, 1926.

quite evident from the circular chart (Fig. 40) where the "furnished" and the "purchased" portions of the budget are represented by two arcs. More than two thirds of the food and 42.8 per cent of the total value of all goods is in the furnished portion.

The farms of New England furnished 38.8 per cent of the total value of goods; farms of the Southern States, 45.6 per cent, and farms of the North Central States, 41.6 per cent, of all goods used.

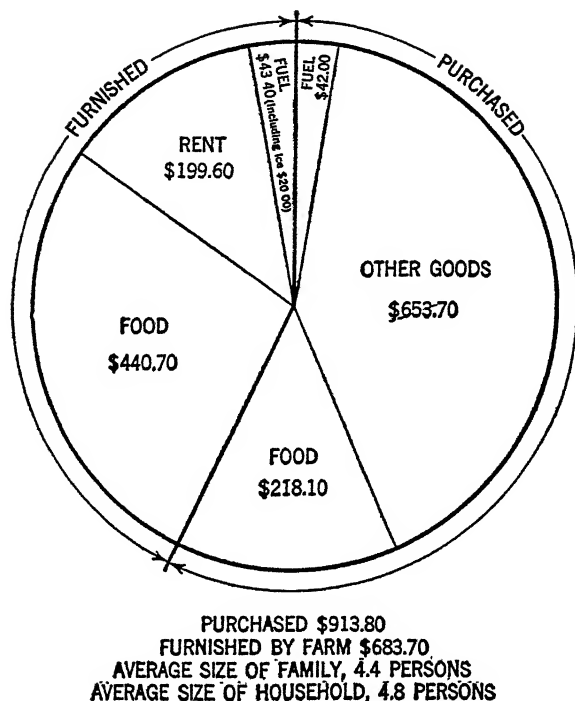


FIG. 40. DISTRIBUTION OF THE AVERAGE VALUE OF GOODS AMONG THE PRINCIPAL GROUPS OF GOODS, FURNISHED BY THE FARM AND PURCHASED FOR HOUSEHOLD USE, DURING ONE YEAR—2886 FARM HOMES OF SELECTED LOCALITIES IN 11 STATES

Source: Kirkpatrick, E. L., *The Farmer's Standard of Living*, Department Bulletin 1466, United States Department of Agriculture, November, 1926.

One of the important findings of the study of the tenant on the cotton plantation was that the net income of the tenant family increased with the amount considered as income from "home-use" production. The income from products used at home decreased with the increase of average acreage in cotton. Apparently in this area improved standards of living can be developed by devoting more land to home-use production and less to cotton.²

It is generally agreed that all through the depression there

² Woofter, T. J., Jr., *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*. Research Monograph 5, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1936.

was an increased dependence of the family upon the products of the farm. There was an increase in canning and in preserving of foods. In some sections there was a notable increase in home gardens fostered by the Agricultural Extension Service, the Farm Security Administration, and relief agencies. To what extent these will continue when the urge is less insistent cannot be foretold, or whether the standard of living of the poorer classes of farm families will actually be benefited by producing more for their own subsistence.¹

Farm, non-farm, and city family income. When income is considered as a limiting factor of living conditions, farm families are in an inferior position compared with other families. The non-farm rural families fare only slightly better, but those living in larger population centers have increasingly larger incomes. These comparisons are carried in Table 54.

Both sets of averages, the mean and the median, show the progressive rise in income with increasing urbanization. The median incomes range from \$965 for farms to \$1730 for the metropolises. They vary less widely than do the mean averages since they are less affected by the very high incomes of the families at the top of the scale. For farm families the mean income was \$1259, but for families living in the metropolises, where the range is widest, it reached the high figure of \$2704. The median income for all urban non-relief families was \$1475 as compared with \$1070 for the rural families.

Occupational comparisons in family incomes can be made from the same source. When this is done, it is evident that the wage-earning and the farming families are most numerous and that they are the two groups with the lowest mean average incomes, \$1289 for the wage-earning, and \$1259 for the farming group. Those grouped together under "other" occupations come next with a mean income of \$1696. The clerical group is third in numerical importance, as well as in size of income, its mean being \$1901. The independent professional group, much the smallest in number, however, has by far the largest mean income, \$6734.

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *Research Monograph on Rural Life in the Depression*. Bulletin 34, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1937.

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TABLE 54. AVERAGE INCOMES OF NON-RELIEF FAMILIES * IN SIX TYPES OF COMMUNITY, 1935-36

Types of Community	Families		Average Number of Persons per Family	Average Income per Family	
	Number	Per cent		Median	Mean
Metropolises: † 1,500,000 population and over....	2,806,900	11.3	3.5	\$1730	\$2704
Large cities: 100,000 to 1,500,000 population....	4,666,700	18.7	3.5	1560	2177
Middle-sized cities: 25,000 to 100,000 population..	2,607,600	10.4	3.7	1360	1813
Small cities: 2500 to 25,000 population.....	4,079,700	16.4	3.7	1290	1653
All urban communities	14,160,900	56.8	3.6	\$1475	\$2064
Rural non-farm communities‡.....	4,585,700	18.4	3.7	\$1210	\$1607
Farms.....	6,166,600	24.8	4.5	965	1259
All rural communities.	10,752,300	43.2	4.2	\$1070	\$1408
All communities.....	24,913,200	100.0	3.8	\$1285	\$1781

* Excludes all families receiving any direct or work relief (however little) at any time during year.

† Metropolises of this size are in North Central region only (New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit).

‡ Includes families living in communities with population under 2500 and families living in the open country, but not on farms.

Farm and city families in Virginia and Minnesota. Differences in family living are evident from a study of white farm and city families in Virginia during 1927-28. The 137 farm families had a net average income of \$1687, while 140 city families averaged \$2635. The city families had a higher expenditure for all the principal items of family living, but in terms of the proportions, food was lower while advancement was higher than in the farm family budgets. The automobile was found to have less widespread use among city families; they bought more insurance. Both absolutely and relatively, city families spent more for cultural things, including books, magazines, and newspapers, than did the farm families. The authors of this study conclude by saying: "It is not presumed that farm and city living standards are entirely comparable through statistical demonstration. We need always to keep in mind that rural and urban life in many ways are fundamentally different and that psychological processes and effects are not possible of

measurement in such manner as to permit of absolute comparison." ¹

Another comparative study of farm and city families was made in Minnesota in 1927-28. The farm families had a net spendable income (amount left after costs of production were paid) of \$2124 per family or \$560 per adult unit, compared with \$3878 per family or \$1173 per adult unit for the urban families. The amount spent for "non-physiological" living purposes (other than food, clothing, and housing) and for investments amounted to \$1616 per family or \$425 per adult unit for farm families and \$2295 per family or \$695 per adult unit for city families. On the per family basis city families had 42 per cent more net spendable income for "items other than physiological necessities." This percentage rose to 63 on the per adult unit basis. The author says: "But these figures do not tell the full story. The farm cash income and expenditures are low because of the possibilities for the direct appropriation from nature of many of the items in their family living, such as food, house rent, and fuel. Compensating for these items in a city comparison is a very difficult process. The single farm dwelling with its peace and quiet, its large lawn and comparative safety for children, is something that can be purchased only with large sums of money in towns." ²

Village families. The case of 104 village families in Crozet, Virginia, for 1929-30 is presented to show a village situation which can be compared with the farm and city families of Virginia in the study just cited. In the village study, the families were divided into three classifications: poor, intermediate, and prosperous, on the basis of the total expenditures for family living.

From the standpoint of total costs or expenditures for all purposes, the poorer village families appear to have had better living than did a corresponding group of farm or city families.

¹ Gee, Wilson, and Stauffer, Wm. H., *Rural and Urban Standards of Living*. Institute Monograph 6, University of Virginia, 1929.

² Zimmerman, Carle C., *Incomes and Expenditures of Farm and City Families*. Bulletin 255, University of Minnesota, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1929.

This applies to three of the principal groups of goods — namely, clothing, rent, furnishings and equipment — and household operation. In the matter of food, they were on a par with farm families, but in health maintenance and personal goods, they were equal to city families.

Intermediate village families lived about as well as did intermediate farm families, but not so well as did intermediate city families, if total cost or value of all goods and services is accepted as the measuring stick.

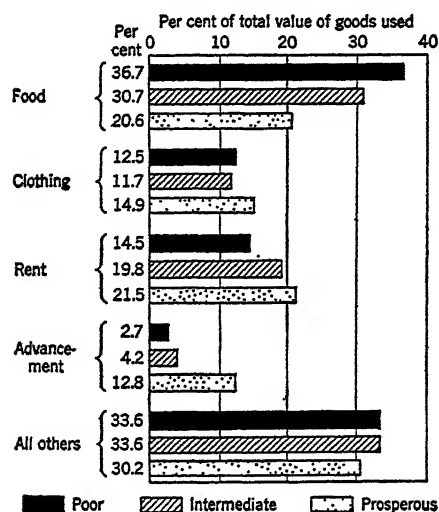


FIG. 41. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL COST OR VALUE OF FAMILY LIVING ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL KINDS OF GOODS AND SERVICES — FOR CLASSIFIED GROUPS OF 104 VILLAGE FAMILIES, CROZET, VIRGINIA, 1929-1930

Source: Kirkpatrick and Tough, *Standards of Living in the Village of Crozet, Virginia*, University of Virginia Record Extension Series, vol. XVI, no. 2, August, 1931.

Their expenditures for household operation and personal goods and services and for life and health insurance were about the same as for the farm families. For furnishings and equipment and for maintenance of health, these village families spent decidedly less than the other two groups.

Prosperous village families did not live so well as did corresponding farm or city families, when expenditures for all purposes were the index for comparison. They spent less for all the principal groups of goods and services, except for advancement,

than did the prosperous farm families. The prosperous village families spent least for fuel, \$102 per family, compared with \$159 for the corresponding farm families and \$263 for the corresponding city families. They also spent less for use of the automobile, \$168 per family, in comparison with \$353 and \$350 per family.

As a conclusion to these comparisons, it must be emphasized that rural family living cannot be compared in any wholesale fashion with urban or village conditions. The surroundings and the plan of farm life differ from those of the city. The major satisfactions of farm life, and probably to a less extent, village life, come from different sources and are less dependent on money income than are those of city life. The farmer has close at hand some of the things for which the villager or the urbanite is willing to pay well in time or money. On the other hand, the urban dweller may be envied by the farmer or villager for his readier access to some of the sources of advancement goods and services. In all comparisons one must keep in mind that farm, village, and city modes of living are different in many ways, and that mental and emotional effects are not susceptible of measurement in such manner as to permit complete comparisons.

Standards of living have both their material and non-material or spiritual aspects; this is one reason why some people prefer farm life to city life. With the greater freedom of movement and contacts outlined in the chapter on rural-urban relationships, it should be easier in the future than in the past for those who prefer rural life to choose it. Rural people can make a significant contribution to American attitudes and values, especially with respect to the non-material but essential elements of life.

Conclusions of a similar sort derive from a direct study of rural life during the depression period. It is suggested that despite the fact that money income and possibilities for attaining great wealth in farming will doubtless be relatively less than in other occupations requiring equal ability, it may be that the values of the non-material goods of farm life will take on a greater importance. It is likewise possible that in the future there may be an increasing number of families who will enter farming because they really prefer it, rather than because they were born on a farm or had a chance to acquire one through inheritance. The report, therefore, calls definite attention to the necessity for maintaining a satisfactory cultural environ-

ment in the country through schools, churches, libraries, organized social life, and medical service. This is urged because not all of life is lived within the home.²

Household conveniences. The house and its conveniences are other important factors in rural family living. The house may be considered the symbol of the home while its equipment and conveniences are the instruments which, in the hands of skillful women, may greatly influence standards of living. Rural housing, from the standpoint of new construction, repair, or maintenance, and the introduction of modern conveniences, has suffered severely during the period of agriculture's distress. The national government, during the last two administrations, has tried diligently to set in motion plans for the relief of too great indebtedness on homes, and for the encouragement of new construction, repairs, and conveniences.

The item of convenience frequently considered the most important is electricity. The accompanying table shows the situation in farm dwellings as found in 1930, together with regional variations. From this it can be seen that only slightly over 13 per cent of the farms reported different conveniences. This was an increase of 6 per cent over 1920, however, and there is every evidence to expect an even larger increase in the 1940 census.

The Rural Electrification Administration, recently transferred to the Department of Agriculture, reports that every effort will be made to spread the use of electricity among farm families. Since the beginning of the Rural Electrification Administration in 1935, the number of electrified farms has more than doubled. This public agency, as well as the private utilities, has done much to stimulate this increase. Over 100 thousand miles of lines have been built by the Administration, providing service to more than a quarter of a million farm and village families. With an allotment of 238 million dollars as of August 1, 1939, an additional 240 thousand miles of lines for a half million rural families is contemplated. A basic idea ad-

² Sanderson, Dwight, *Research Monograph on Rural Life in the Depression*. Bulletin 34, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1937.

TABLE 55. DWELLINGS ON FARMS LIGHTED BY ELECTRICITY,
BY DIVISION

Census Division	Dwellings on Farms Lighted by Electricity			
	Number		Per cent	
	1920	1930	1920	1930
All divisions.	452,620	841,310	7.0	13.4
New England.	24,000	53,655	15.3	42.9
Middle Atlantic.	60,102	114,098	14.1	31.9
East North Central . .	113,871	202,656	10.5	21.0
West North Central. . .	97,847	146,969	8.9	13.2
South Atlantic.	45,407	64,173	3.9	6.1
East South Central. . .	21,720	31,952	2.1	3.0
West South Central. . .	19,352	40,240	1.9	3.6
Mountain.	25,161	49,173	10.3	20.4
Pacific.	45,100	138,394	19.3	52.9

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Agriculture. Summary for the United States, 1929-1930.*

vanced by the national leaders is that electricity on the farm can be a source of income rather than an extra item of expense, and that it can do much to improve family living in the home.

The Edison Electric Institute estimates that at the end of 1938 there were 1.5 million out of the 6.3 million farms — 21 per cent — receiving electric service. Rhode Island was highest with 98.1 per cent, and Mississippi lowest with 2.6 per cent. This Institute also estimates that there is about one farm equipped with some kind of home electric plant for every six and one half that receive service from a central station.

Another convenience closely related to standards of living is water available in the house. The census for 1930 indicates an increase from 10 per cent in 1920 to 16 per cent in 1930 for all farms. There is every reason to believe that this increase will extend into the next decade. The differences among the various regions are fairly regular, although in the Southern division the proportions are low while in New England and the Pacific States they are high.

Farm and village housing. The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership in 1932 included a subcommittee which reported on rural and village housing conditions and problems, including design, construction, farmstead

TABLE 56. WATER PIPED INTO FARM HOMES, BY DIVISION

Census Division	Farm Homes with Piped Water			
	Number		Per cent	
	1920	1930	1920	1930
All divisions.	643,899	994,202	10.0	15.8
New England.	74,954	79,815	47.9	63.9
Middle Atlantic.	98,936	135,699	23.3	37.9
East North Central. . . .	134,877	211,272	12.4	21.9
West North Central. . . .	107,015	180,402	9.8	16.2
South Atlantic.	38,775	66,763	3.3	6.3
East South Central. . . .	15,999	27,171	1.5	2.6
West South Central. . . .	49,191	88,376	4.9	8.0
Mountain.	26,343	48,324	10.8	20.0
Pacific.	97,809	156,380	41.8	59.7

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Agriculture. Summary for the United States, 1929-1930.*

planning and beautification, as well as on economic and education aspects.[†]

A study of farm and village houses was made in 28 representative counties, well distributed over the country, on the basis of types of farm areas. From these investigations the following conclusions were drawn. There is little apparent need for more space (which has been a common need in urban housing) in most farmhouses, with the exception of instances in the Appalachian-Ozark Highlands, the Cotton Belt, and the Great Plains area. Generally, farm dwellings were built some years ago when costs of constructing and operating houses were low. In many cases, even in the Corn Belt and the Northern Dairy sections, not all the available rooms are in use throughout the year. There are exceptions, however, in the southern sections, the Great Plains and the Great Basin areas, where the need for more space is felt.

Modern equipment and conveniences have received too little attention in all of the sections. There are many farmhouses in the different regions, the Appalachian-Ozark Highlands, the

[†] Committee on Farm and Village Housing, A. R. Mann, chairman; report prepared by Bruce L. Melvin and edited by John M. Gries and James Ford. The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Washington, D.C., 1932. In the paragraphs which follow there is literal and even *verbatim* use of this committee's report, as it is the best available source.

Cotton Belt, and the Great Plains areas particularly, where items of equipment which are indispensable to comfort, cleanliness, and the maintenance of health are not available, and where modern conveniences seem out of reason. Much is to be desired in all sections in the adaptations of the farmhouse to the purely physical needs of the family. There is also a field for unlimited development in farm housing from the aesthetic point of view, in regard to the setting, the landscape planning and the planting, the room arrangement, the interior finish, furnishings and equipment, as well as additional labor-saving facilities for conserving the energy of the homemaker.

Although, according to this study, village housing problems are less acute than farm housing problems, they also merit further investigation and attention. There is need for the development of housing standards which are attainable by different groups in the village population. These standards should take into consideration the architectural design of the houses, and the methods of financing. They should be developed in the light of a growing interest in village planning for individual comfort and social efficiency in housing.

An interesting section of the report is devoted to the history of rural architecture in the United States. To the student of rural society it is much more than a record of plan and design of dwelling; it is the story of family ideals, and the culture of a new country made up of many groups of differing backgrounds, as represented by English, Dutch, French, and Spanish Colonial dwellings. It is also a record of the westward march of the frontier with the simple log cabin; the more substantial structure in Kentucky, Tennessee, and along the Ohio River; the frame house of the Mid-West with the constant influence of New England in its architecture, and finally some of the best designed and most artistic farm homes in the rich fruit areas of California, Oregon, and Washington.

After urging the need for more study of the problems, for adequate and recognized standards and for a greatly expanded program of education, the report concludes with the following significant paragraph:

It is clearly recognized that American agriculture and rural life are in process of reconstruction, but it is believed that to strengthen and enrich rural family life is a paramount function that can be partially performed by aiding home improvement. The house, as a physically conditioning factor, in any setting, makes easy or difficult the formation of habits of order, cleanliness, healthful living, and an appreciation of beauty. It may be an object of pride or embarrassment. It constitutes part of the objective environment in which happy or unhappy relationships within the family grow, and in which the child's personality — fully blossoming or dwarfed — evolves. It is believed that better planned homes, more modernized houses, and an increasing number of flower-and-shrubbery decked yards on our farms and within our villages will stimulate an idealism that can give new values to the economic motive in society, and in the midst of financial depressions hold rural living above the ravages. However, economic achievement cannot be the end for human effort; economic activities fluctuate; the longings of men and women reach for permanency in satisfactions — health, harmony within the home, physical comforts, beauty, and many tangible qualities that give zest to family and individual living.

FACTORS INFLUENCING WAYS OF LIVING

It is not possible, of course, to account for all the changes and differences in ways of living shown by the studies which have been presented, yet some of the factors influencing those ways can be pointed out. Illustrations will be drawn from cases so that ways of living among various types of rural families can be further described. It is well to point out again that actual figures for any one group of families or for any one year may mean very little in themselves. They take on importance for the student of society only as they reveal important relationships in the home and in the various social groups of which the family is a part. The factors which are to be discussed should be thought of as forces or situations which help determine the standards in the home as a social institution and the ways of living which are found there at any given time or place.

The family cycle. The description of cycles of family devel-

opment in the earlier chapter shows that rural families are constantly in the process of change; children come and finally go. The period for this full cycle in an average family is about twenty-five years, and the demands on the family's budget change with the swing of the cycle. It is not only a question of the number of children, but also of the fact that their requirements change with age.¹

Disregarding age and sex, there is, on the average, an additional cost of slightly more than \$1.40 per child. The proportion of the value of food to the value of all goods increases from 39.6 per cent for families with no children, to 47.5 per cent for families with six or more children. Similarly, the proportion used for clothing increases from 11.1 per cent to 17.9 per cent; it is the clothing item which reveals most clearly the differences of age and sex. In a chart giving the average amounts of clothing purchased for persons of different sex and age groups, sons and daughters from 19 to 24 years of age become conspicuous, almost doubling the amounts they required between the ages of 12 to 14 years. During the high-school and college period there is a decided contrast in the behavior pattern of the family as compared with the earlier stages and with the later, all-adult period. Radical adjustments in the family budget have to be made during the former period or else the income must increase correspondingly, a possibility which can seldom be realized. The important question, therefore, is, can the family anticipate and make preparation for the changing consumption requirements in its changing family cycles?

Family management. Just as the success of the farm or of a business is more than a matter of farm or business management, so the success of the household as a consumer center is more than a matter of home management in the narrow sense. Both are questions of family management. Different families may spend quite different amounts to get the same relative kind of consumption goods or services. Different items of the budget

¹ Kirkpatrick, E. L., Tough, Rosalind, and Cowles, May, *The Life Cycle of the Farm Family*. Research Bulletin 121, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, September, 1934.

may give more satisfaction to some families than to others. Standards of living, therefore, become a matter of management quite as much as a question of income. Making the most of home resources is an important consideration. The truth of this can be seen in the differences in distribution of the purchased and furnished goods by farm families of the same relative income class. Management practices which the family may utilize are budgeting in advance, keeping accounts, and knowing how to get their money's worth in the market.

Skillful management and co-operation of members of the family may do much in the way of converting local resources to good advantage, such as improving the home grounds by planting trees, shrubs, flowers, vegetables, and grass. Many of these things can be done with very little cash expenditure. Time may be used to better advantage if carefully planned in advance, or fully utilized for home-talent recreational and educational activity. A sense of "home" may be made real by a touch of the artistic, by good taste, and by appropriateness. The question is, can the rural family make its house its home?

Relation to income. According to various measures which have been devised, there does seem to be correspondence between larger incomes and higher expenditures for family living. Yet there is no evidence that the relationship is a thoroughly automatic one, that is, one cannot reason directly from cause to effect. Larger incomes do not necessarily mean greater expenditures for living, nor do greater expenditures imply actual higher standards of living. They only make them possible. Income is a limiting or a conditioning factor.

There is little doubt that greater attention given to spending and to improving home conditions in the last two decades has had important effects on actually improving standards of living. Groups of families have had conferences, as was described earlier. They have talked over their budgets and considered their essential needs for living. This has tended to vivify those needs as well as to guarantee greater incentive to convert the resources of the farm to meet those expressed needs. To be

sure, many such hopeful efforts have had a rude shock during successive years of emergency.

Changes in a family's way of living fluctuate less quickly and less violently with changes in general economic conditions than does income. Farm families, like other families, tend to hold to certain established standards. They attempt to maintain their accustomed ways of living, even though former sources of income have been cut off; savings are used or debts are contracted in order to carry on the family traditions. One mother asserted in no uncertain terms that she would see the farm go before she would deny her children the opportunities of a high-school education.

The struggle to maintain standards in a period of decreasing buying power and of declining prices has many serious consequences. The evidences are to be found in increased mortgage indebtedness, tax delinquencies, and lack of up-keep of farm buildings and fences, for as one popular writer has said, "Farm folks are eating their fences, their barns, and their houses." He means, of course, that what income is available is going toward the family living rather than toward the usual repairs about the farmstead.

Variations in income levels are reflected in the proportions of total expenditures that go for the various goods and service items within the family budget. Professor Hoyt has estimated the percentage distribution for various income levels, which illustrates this point very well. In the table which she has prepared, the estimated proportions for food and savings have the greatest variation, but they move in opposite directions as the income groups are traversed upward.

The factors at work in families whose expenditures are very low are sure to exert a different influence than do the same factors in families whose expenditures are relatively high. This was evident in the case of Crozet Village, Virginia, where the families were divided into the three classes: poor, intermediate, and prosperous. The contrast in the proportions of the total expenditure going for food in the first and third groups is striking. In the poorer families a set of forces is in operation over

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TABLE 57. ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES AND SAVINGS BY INCOME GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1937
(Author's estimates)

Item	Income Group							
	Under \$1000	\$1000 to \$1500	\$1500 to \$2500	\$2500 to \$5000	\$5000 to \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$25,000	\$25,000 to \$50,000	\$50,000 and over
Food.....	45	38	33	20	14	9	5	2
Clothing.....	12	13	12	11	8	6	4	2
Housing.....	12	14	15	15	12	11	10	7
Fuel and light...	5	5	5	4	4	2	1	a
Miscellaneous..	23	25	28	37	43	47	48	37
Savings.....	3	5	7	13	19	25	32	52

a Less than 1 per cent.

Source: Hoyt, Elizabeth Ellis, *Consumption in Our Society*. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1938.

which the individual family has only limited control. Their choices are definitely restricted.¹ At the other end of the scale there may be what has been called "conspicuous consumption"; that is, spending for effect, for ostentation, without regard to those standards which concern the welfare of the family or the groups of which it is a part.

Relation to tenure status. Differences in ways of living in the homes of owners, tenants, and laborers seem more significant than many other factors. A study of the social status and farm tenure of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt farmers compares the tenure groups while attempting to control or hold constant, by statistical means, the racial and the geographic factors.²

A comparison of median size of house in number of rooms shows the following: Northern owners, 7.7; Northern tenants, 7.3; Northern laborers, 6.5; Southern white owners, 5.7; Southern white tenants and colored owners (same), 4.4; Southern white laborers, 3.9; Negro laborers, 3.8; and Negro tenants, 3.5. When these same groups are compared with respect to possession of three household conveniences, running water, kitchen

¹ See Zimmerman, Carle C., "Engel's Law of Expenditure for Food," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, November, 1932, for a discussion of the food item.

² Schuler, E. A., *Social Status and Farm Tenure — Attitudes and Social Conditions of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt Farmers*. Social Research Report IV, United States Department of Agriculture, 1938.

sink with drain, and indoor toilet, surprising differences between the North and South were found. Nearly three fifths of both owners and tenants in the North possessed these conveniences while only about one fifth of the Northern laborers had them. In the case of Southern whites, the order was completely reversed, the owners reporting possession in only a little more than one fifth of the cases while of the tenants and laborers nearly two fifths had them. For Negroes, the proportion having the conveniences, regardless of tenure class, was negligible.

Racial differences. It is commonly known that there is variation in ways of living on farms between groups having different backgrounds, yet differences between the various racial and nationality groups in America are not fully known. Racial comparisons in small but carefully selected samples of Southern white and Negro farm families were included in the study of tenure just described. It was found that the average number of rooms in Negro houses was 3.2, less than one room per person, while Southern whites had an average of 4.6 which was more than one room per person. For heating facilities, about two thirds of the Negro families and one half of the Southern whites had only fireplaces. For lighting, kerosene lamps were used by about eight out of ten Southern whites and about ninety-eight out of a hundred Negro families. More than half of both Negroes and whites in the South were getting their water from open wells. One of the most striking differences between the two races was the matter of sanitation. The author writes that "... for practically one third of the Negro families in our sample no toilet facilities in either house or outhouse are available. This difference alone should serve to set apart the level of living of the Negro families from that of the white families..."

Agitation of market and sales pressure. Mass production requires mass consumption, and agitation of the market through national advertising, direct-mail selling, and the constant pressure of salesmen is surely influencing the ways of living of rural as well as urban families. The extent and the character of this influence is still largely a matter of conjecture; studies have not

extended far enough to tell definitely. There are also the modern devices of credit agencies and installment buying; credit practices and instruments have been expanded. In a buying and selling economy the family feels the impact of a set of forces quite different from those at work when it operated on its own individual spinning wheel, churn, and smoke house basis. The availability of goods of recognized quality and of reasonable price is a first-rate problem for the household consumption manager. Dependence upon merchandising is a major factor in the interdependence of town and country, as a previous chapter has emphasized. The question for this home manager is, how can she be sure of her market and how can she know when she is getting her money's worth?

Education of parents. Analysis of the 2886 families described previously shows that the amount of education of parents, farm operators, and homemakers makes a difference in the ways of living of the family. Several smaller and more recent studies have also verified this conclusion, namely, that the schooling of the homemaker is more closely associated with ways of living than is that of the farm operator. More education on the part of both parents is associated with greater total expenditure. The proportioning of the various items within the family budget changes also. For those families whose homemaker has had more than average schooling, the percentage for food decreases noticeably and the percentage for "advancement goods" almost always increases. It should not be argued that education can be measured by amount of schooling, since the character of the experience is vastly more important; nevertheless, education, even by such comparisons, is a factor of consequence in family living. The question is, how shall rural youth be educated for the great adventure of homemaking in modern rural society?

Emergency times. Amounts spent for family living in normal times are necessarily altered, sometimes very sharply, during emergency times. The distress in agriculture, which is traced in other chapters, proved to be a major factor in influencing family living during the past decade. Families have been seek-

ing survival at almost any cost. This cost is in terms of standards of living scaled radically lower, in the sacrifice of family traditions and customs, and in a retrenchment from many values which were formerly considered essential. Neighborhood associations have been strengthened in an attempt to preserve those forces of group organization which have sustained individual families in times of emergency, but the return of sons and daughters with their families to the family hearth creates a heavier demand on household resources.

Farm families in three of the major farm-type areas of Wisconsin which were studied in 1929 were revisited in 1933. Figures showing the changes are given in Table 58. The distribution by percentages for the various groups of items in the family budgets of one county is found in the chart. By means of index numbers, the 1933 figures were adjusted to 1929 price levels, so that more direct comparisons could be made. Although the dollar had considerably more purchasing power in 1933 than in 1929, there actually were fewer dollars' worth of goods and services used for family living. Families in one county cut their purchased living costs by 41 per cent in the four-year period; in another area by 33 per cent; and in the third, where costs were very low at the time of the first study, by 38 per cent. Curtailments were less marked when compared in terms of adjusted dollars, that is, when 1933 costs were converted to 1929 price levels, but even then the reductions were 28, 20, and 14 per cent, respectively. These decreases were significant, for they represented actual reductions in the amount of goods available to families for consumption purposes.

The proportioning of the curtailments among the various items in the family budget in the county where the largest reductions were made, but also the one which had the highest expenditures in both years, can be observed in the accompanying chart or pie diagram (Fig. 42). In 1933 it is evident that the "pie" was simply not all there — a slice was gone for every item but rent. The families lived in the same houses, but taxes continued and depreciation set in.

TABLE 58. AVERAGE COST OF LIVING FOR THREE GROUPS OF WISCONSIN FARM FAMILIES, 1929 AND 1933

Items	Green County, 101 Families			Portage County, 122 Families			Sawyer County, 90 Families		
	1929	1933		1929	1933		1929	1933	
		At 1933 Price Level	Ad- justed to 1929 Price Level		At 1933 Price Level	Ad- justed to 1929 Price Level		At 1933 Price Level	Ad- justed to 1929 Price Level
Total cost*.....	\$1714	\$1091	\$1440	\$1322	\$910	\$1258	\$922	\$611	\$902
Furnished by farm.....	573	414	621	483	345	535	401	290	485
Purchased.....	1141	677	819	839	565	723	521	321	417
Food.....	519	303	531	493	324	555	457	300	525
Furnished.....	265	149	295	219	130	257	249	174	332
Purchased.....	254	154	236	274	194	298	208	126	193
Rent (furnished).....	284	228	284	188	157	211	87	75	106
Clothing.....	214	106	137	175	98	131	104	64	81
Fuel.....	122	104	118	107	80	93	76	48	55
Furnished.....	24	37	42	76	58	67	65	41	47
Purchased.....	98	67	76	31	22	26	11	7	8
Advancement†.....	109	74	77	69	56	59	34	19	20
Furnishings.....	84	24	32	47	13	17	9	11	14
Other (miscellaneous).....	382	252	261	243	182	192	155	94	101

* Goods furnished by the farm are evaluated at the farm price, rather than the retail price.

† The 1933 prices were made comparable to the 1929 data by the use of the Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers, except food. Since no index was given for advancement, the one for miscellaneous commodities was used to adjust this item as well as other miscellaneous goods and services. United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, vol. xxxvii, no. 2 (February, 1933), p. 431; vol. xxxvii, no. 2 (August, 1933), p. 458; vol. xxxviii, no. 2 (February, 1934), p. 479.

The index figures showing price changes for food were based on local prices paid to the farmer for the various products furnished, and on retail prices paid by the farmer for the articles purchased. They were weighted according to the 1929 consumption in the families which were studied.

‡ The item "Advancement" includes formal education, reading, organization dues, church, Red Cross, and recreation.

Source: Kirkpatrick, E. L., Tough, Rosalind, and Cowles, May, *How Farm Families Meet the Emergency*. Research Bulletin 126, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, January, 1935.

Important conclusions which were drawn will suggest something of what is really happening to farm families. The following are very brief summary statements, concerning changes: *Food* — shrinkage in purchased somewhat offset by increases in that furnished by farm; *housing* — cumulative lack of repairs and maintenance; *household operation* — significant reduction in use of automobile and telephone; *furnishings* — very small amounts spent for new equipment; *clothing* — marked curtailment in all areas; *health* — meager outlay and very limited service; *advancement* — reduction in reading matter, education, recreation, organization dues, and church support; *insurance* —

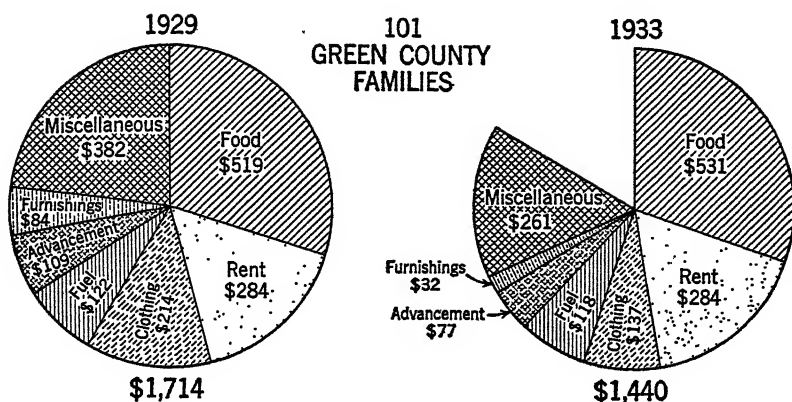


FIG. 42. CHANGES IN FAMILY LIVING FOR ONE GROUP OF WISCONSIN FARM FAMILIES — 1929 AND 1933

Figures for 1933 adjusted to 1929 prices. For method of adjustment see footnote to previous table.

wide fluctuations by areas; *income available for living* — two thirds of families in two areas and three fourths in third area did not have sufficient funds to cover living cost in 1933; *social organizations* — contributions cut but increased interest and participation; *education* — determination to keep children in school, but pronounced retrenchment in tax levies for schools.

Customs and the demands of society. A final factor which imposes its influence upon standards of family living is that of custom and the demands of society itself. It may be well to emphasize again that families in their homes are not independent integers; rather, they are singularly dependent upon and associated with other families in other homes. Indeed, it is in this way that the social structure or organization of rural society is formed. Society has many different ways of making its demands felt. Some are direct, others indirect and subtle. There is that wide range of psychological and cultural factors known by such terms as custom, tradition, and conventionality. "It is the thing to do," or "this is the way our folks have always done it," are powerful means of determining the directions consumption shall take. They play their part in answering such questions as present *versus* future spending, or in determining

the competition between land-ownership and consumption goods to which reference has been made.

The potency of custom and tradition is well illustrated in a story of two Minnesota farmers.² One who was relatively wealthy moved into town and purchased a modern house. He could not get used to the idea of shaving in the bathroom, but always kept his razor and soap mug in the kitchen, just as he had done on the farm. The other built a modern house on his farm, but during the cold weather always turned off the heat in the living rooms and made the family stay in the kitchen because he worried about "wasting so much heat."

Moreover, society has a way of imposing its demands upon the family by legislation and taxation. Under the rationalization of public policy, society is assuming more and more of the functions which were once considered largely prerogatives of the family and the home, such as education, health, sanitation, child care and guidance, and inspection of foods. Nevertheless, the urge found in rural people to live well is a great social resource. The determination to improve family as well as community standards of living is clearly discernible to those who know rural America and from the numerous study reports which have appeared through the years. This struggle may well become a challenge as compelling as the conquest of the frontier.

All of living cannot be done in the home, however. The recognition of this fact leads to a consideration of those community institutions and agencies with which members of the rural family are increasingly associating themselves. They are subjects for the succeeding chapters.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Give your own definition of consumption. What forces have been at work recently compelling changes in farmers' and villagers' standards of living? What have been the social and community consequences?
2. What items does your family trim first with a declining income? Which

² Zimmerman, Carle C., *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. XXIII (May, 1928), p. 910.

last? What items does it expand first with an increasing income? Which last?

3. How may a farm or village family improve its standards of living without increasing its income?
4. List in order of what you consider to be the four most needed home improvements in a community, rural or urban, in which you are acquainted. Give reasons for your choice.
5. Secure as accurate information as you can regarding the costs last year of operating the household which you know best. You will need to make estimates when definite amounts are not known. With this information in hand, make the calculations necessary to the construction of the table outlined below. (It is possible that the ease or the difficulty with which this exercise is done will illustrate the importance as well as the problems connected with the whole matter of family standards of living.)

Items of Consumption	Total of Furnished and Purchased		Furnished by Garden, Farm or Store (if Owned by Family)		Total Purchased	
	Dollars	Per cent	Dollars	Per cent	Dollars	Per cent
Total		100		100		100
1. Food						
2. Clothing						
3. Heat, light, fuel						
4. Rent (including taxes, insurance, depreciation on house)						
5. All other operating expense						
6. Health						
7. Advancement						
a. education						
b. recreation						
c. religion						
d. savings						
e. all others						
8. Personal incidental items						

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CHAPTER XVII

EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOLS

THE American people are noted for their interest in education and their belief that a democratic form of government makes education at public expense a social necessity. As early as the 1640's the colony of Massachusetts passed two laws requiring that each town (township) tax its citizens for the support of a school. From this beginning public education for all children spread throughout the nation. At first education for everybody did not go beyond the elementary school, but in the last sixty years the opportunity for high-school training has become almost universal in most states.

The school district as set up within our rural townships became the smallest tax unit. The land was dotted, before the nineteenth century was very old, with thousands of these districts, each with its school, consisting usually of only one room. The majority of the districts covered several square miles. Although the small school district and its one-room, ungraded school are now largely outmoded, as will be shown, it is well to pay tribute to the pioneers who succeeded in placing such an institution within walking distance of almost every six year old child.

THE RURAL SCHOOL SITUATION

It is important to note also that the country school became a neighborhood institution. It was omnipresent. Neighborhoods might lack churches or any one or more of the other social institutions, but never a school. Each school district was administered by trustees or directors chosen from among those who lived in the tiny area inhabited by its pupils. Its teacher often boarded with the families of the neighborhood in rotation. Few were the families who were not in direct touch with the district school through the attendance of some child. No

wonder that the "little red schoolhouse" lives on in the song and story of the nineteenth century.

Times changed. Farm families, as we have seen, grew smaller, farms enlarged, the population decreased. Educational standards were raised. The one-room, ungraded school, even if it had enough children to subsist, became increasingly unable, largely because of limitation in personnel and financing, to satisfy either school administrators or parents and was handicapped in meeting the demand for an enlarged curriculum and the entrance standards of the American high school. The automobile and good roads made accessible the village and town schools, which, it was assumed, usually offered better educational opportunities. The movement for a consolidation of country schools, described later, began. Nevertheless, one-room schools have persisted; there were 138,542 of them and more than 24,000 two-teacher schools in the United States in 1935, comprising altogether 76.3 per cent of all rural schools, and more than three fifths of all schools in the country.

Rural and urban schools compared. Rural education obviously constitutes the major part of the nation's educational enterprise. In fact, this is a conservative statement. Nearly 89 per cent of our 239,000 grade schools and about 80 per cent of our high schools are rural; so also are 55 per cent of our 857,934 public school teachers and 49.2 per cent of our more than 26 million public school pupils. Despite these facts, only two fifths of the current national expenditure for public schools is for rural schools.¹ The average daily expense per pupil attending in 1936 was \$91 for urban and \$57 for rural schools.

The implications of these facts are quite clear. The bulk of American education is rural; the problems of supervision, administration, and teacher training are largely rural problems and the fact that three fifths of the states are more rural than the nation as a whole will make this condition continue. Certain differences between rural and urban schools should be

¹ Facts taken from *Biennial Surveys of Education in the United States*, 1934-36, chap. v; and Rural School Circular 27 of the United States Office of Education. Also Circular 132, February, 1934.

noted. The foremost is population density. The average urban elementary school has from seven to eight times as many pupils and five or six times as many teachers as the rural school. Even the school term varied; in the city in 1936 it was 182 days, in the country 164 — a difference of nearly a month. However, in 1926 the difference was 33 school days. Such things obviously affect the curriculum, the organization, and the extra-curricular activities of the school. These figures throw into relief the contrast between rural and urban public education and explain why educators are agitating for some differentiated training for rural teachers, supervisors, and administrators.

These averages conceal some significant regional variations. In five states the rural terms average less than 150 days, all of them in the South. Seven other states, five in the South, had rural terms of less than the national average.

Small schools have some advantages. Where population density is not too low or enrollments too small, the small rural school has some advantages the urban institution lacks. There is far greater opportunity for intimate acquaintanceship among pupils, teachers, and parents and, if teacher-turnover is low, for a prolonged period of contact. This offers many possibilities for socializing experiences and for educational growth. The environment can be more readily utilized and there is more chance for the whole school to join in projects that will promote community betterment and the growth of desirable social traits.¹ Practical illustrations of some of these advantages are given later.

Availability of education in rural areas. What are the educational opportunities for the open-country child? The educational handicaps which he suffers are well known. Despite the progress made in rural education, the farm child still has a shorter term than the city child and frequently lives at a considerable (and often inaccessible) distance from the nearest school. In a special study of 22 representative counties, Gaumnitz found nearly one fourth of the country children

¹ Cf. *Schools in Small Communities. Seventeenth Yearbook*, American Association of School Administrators. Washington, D.C., 1939. Especially chapters I and II.

living more than one and a half miles from their school, and nearly one in twenty more than three miles. Both attendance and enrollment declined noticeably, especially among younger children, as the distance from the school increased, unless transportation was available.¹

Nonetheless the proportion of rural children in school seems to be increasing, especially on the high-school level. In 1934, 60.5 per cent of rural youth 14 to 17 years of age were attending rural high schools. When the number of this group enrolled in high schools in places of 2500 or more population² are considered, it is probable that proportionately as many rural youth are receiving secondary schooling as urban. This latter proportion is 67.9 per cent. The Office of Education estimates that there has been more than 100 per cent increase in rural high-school enrollment in the last decade.

The data on the availability of education in rural areas given above are one of many indications that distance from major centers is a factor in the degree of educational opportunity and probably, though not necessarily, of efficiency.³

Village schools better than open country. Thus far the discussion has dealt with the total rural situation. It should be remembered, however, that the term rural includes both village and open country. Villages and towns offer almost all the high-school education rural America has. More than half of the rural elementary-school enrollment is in village grade schools and this includes about one fourth of all open-country children. All told, about three fifths of all rural children attend village schools.

Village schools are larger, better equipped, have better trained teachers, longer terms, and spend more money per pupil than do those in the open country. Details on some of these points

¹ Cf. Gaummitz, *Availability of Public School Education in Rural Communities*. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., 1931.

² Estimated at between 300,000 and 400,000 on the basis of tables 50 and 58 in *Rural Trends in Depression Years* (Brunner and Lorge), census data and certain unpublished data.

³ Cf. Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*. Columbia University Press, 1937. See pages 153-54 for details.

will be noted later.¹ In some states there is little if any difference between the village and city schools in many of these respects.

School buildings improved. One evidence of this advance in rural education, especially in the villages, is to be found in the school buildings. In 1924, nine tenths of the school buildings in the village centers of the 140 communities surveyed were rated as fair or better. Despite this fact, by 1936, 108 had erected one or more buildings and 25 more had undertaken substantial additions to existing plants. The total capital cost amounted to \$12,500,000. Two fifths of these buildings, representing, however, only one third of the total amount expended, were erected in 1931 and 1934 and 1935. Several more buildings were in prospect. When these are completed, the school plant in these villages will have been almost completely rebuilt since 1924. Federal assistance played a considerable part in school-building construction after 1933. More than two thirds of the new schools erected after that date in the South and Far West were aided by the P.W.A., two out of five in the Middle Atlantic and two out of thirteen in the Middle West. The average cost of the schools built without federal aid was \$67,650, \$10,340 above the investment in the aided buildings. There is some evidence that federal participation and review of the plans held down costs at no sacrifice in the efficiency and quality of the building. The contrast with the open-country schools is made clear when it is realized that the average rural structure, including village and open country, white and colored, was assessed at less than \$6000.²

Reasons for new school construction. In some communities increased enrollment, resulting from an influx of open-country pupils, necessitated new buildings. In others, a sense of pride and a desire to compete with neighboring villages as well as the wish to provide up-to-date educational facilities for their children resulted in additions or new construction. In certain villages civic pride was coupled with a fear that unless adequate

¹ Cf. *ibid.* See Chapter VII for a fuller discussion of these points.

² Derived from Rural School Circular 27, Office of Education, Washington, D.C.

schoolhouses were provided trade would be lost, for trade to some extent follows the pupils. Where villages are fairly close together, as in the Middle Atlantic and older Middle Western States, farmers can shop around for high schools as for hardware. In many cases pressure by the state board of education was a final powerful factor in the acquisition of a new building. Failure to provide certain facilities meant the discrediting of that particular high school, thus affecting, among other things, the college-entrance status of graduates at state institutions. Occasionally failure to comply with recommendation of the state board resulted in the withdrawal of state aid, thereby piling up the tax burden of local residents. Two of the villages studied were in educational difficulties because they could not finance, due to the depression, the new buildings which the state had ordered. One of the villages had defeated the enabling bond issue five times. In the other, a strong childless minority was advocating the abolition of the high school altogether, or at least the removal of the two upper years.

Increasing influences of state boards. This growth in the great but indirect power of the state boards of education, especially as related to rural systems, is one of the marked trends of the last few years. In every region school administrators and local board members commented upon it. On the whole, this is a beneficial development, for the state often succors rural schools; but where the state board lacks an adequate understanding of the peculiar problems of the local system, it may create real hardships, as described above.² Some state boards are, however, illy staffed and the potentialities of their leadership must wait upon the strengthening of such boards as was recognized by the President's Advisory Committee on Education in its report in 1938.

It appears then that the rural school is of importance because

² State control of rural education is exerted in the following ways: supervision of building plans and buildings so as to safeguard health and prevent fires while at the same time seeing that an efficient school plant is maintained; formulation of the qualifications for a teacher's certificate; standardizing and often raising local salaries; checking up on local educational finances, suggesting curricula and attempting in various ways to put expert service at the disposal of the community.

it trains approximately half the youth of the nation, that in facilities and availability it presents sharp contrasts to the urban school, although in the agricultural villages the gap is not nearly so noticeable. In view of these differences, it is important to discover how rural schools are financed

RURAL SCHOOL FINANCING

Rural schools are financed in a number of ways. Local taxes usually bear the major cost, although state and federal aid is granted in considerable if varying measure. Naturally, when such aid increases — as it has been increasing in many states since the depression — state control of policies has often been extended also, in accordance with the proverb, “Who pays the piper calls the tune.” In two or three states, notably Delaware and North Carolina, almost the whole burden of education is borne by the state. In seven more states, including West Virginia, California, and Indiana, from 1931 to 1934 the state agreed to guarantee an increasing share of the cost of education, although in some cases these increased appropriations meant divorce from state control.

State aid. State aid to schools has gone through two cycles. From 1890 to 1895 the proportion of public school revenue derived from federal and state sources was 23 per cent; it dropped to 16 per cent in 1925 and rose to 17.3 per cent in 1930, when the variation by states was from 87.9 per cent in Delaware to 1.7 per cent in Kansas. Since 1930 there has been a great increase in state aid, which in 1936 amounted to 29.4 per cent of the cost of public school education. The local share in these years dropped to 63.5 per cent from 72.7 per cent. Counties supplied the rest. In 14 states less than 10 per cent of the school costs was secured from state and federal sources; in 25, the average exceeded that of the nation as a whole. Sixteen states, nine of them in the South,¹ contribute more than

¹ Mort, Paul R., *State Support for Public Education*. American Council on Education, 1933, pp. 26-31. This volume of 496 pages is the best study and discussion of the subject. It is part of a National Study of School Finance. Cf. also chap. v, *Biennial Survey of Education*, 1934-36, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

25 per cent of the total cost of their public education. These figures are for entire states and for both rural and urban schools. They indicate the great diversity of methods of financing rural schools.¹

This state aid is given with a view to equalizing educational opportunity but a study by the President's Advisory Committee on Education found that "in fewer than one third of the states do equalization plans appear to provide for . . . a reasonably equitable distribution of aid to those areas that probably have the greatest need."²

In this respect practice in the United States seems to lag behind that in many other democracies. In New Zealand and Australia, for instance, as in other nations of the British Commonwealth, every effort is made to give the rural child just as good educational advantages as are enjoyed by his urban cousin.³

Pros and cons of state aid. This matter of increased state aid for schools is arousing much discussion. In some states the factions on this point are urban *versus* rural. In one Eastern commonwealth augmented aid to schools has been defeated in the legislature for fifteen years because of such a division. City people not unnaturally object to contributing to the cost of the education of farmers and villagers. The latter groups retort that a democracy means equality of educational opportunity, the cost of which should be spread equitably over the entire commonwealth if not over the nation, especially since a large proportion of rural children — approximately half of them in normal times — become urban residents. They point out that there are great inequalities in the type of wealth taxed for school purposes, which now consists chiefly of real estate. Thus even in one largely urban state, the assessed valuation per child in the eight most urban counties

¹ For a discussion of methods to extend state aid, cf. Swift, Fletcher H., *Public School Finance*, and a summary by Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, pp. 179-80.

² Cf. Edwards, N., and Richey, H. S., *The Extent of Equalization Secured Through State School Funds*. Washington, D.C., 1939.

³ Cf. Kandel, I. L., ed., *Rural Education and Rural Society*. Yearbook, International Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1938.

was well over double the figure in the eight most rural counties. On the other hand, as in Missouri, the state-aid program was the creation of the rural districts which controlled a majority of the legislative votes.

Educators have quite generally come to favor state aid, an effort at equalization of costs and opportunity, and this seems to be the trend, although the depression has compelled some states to reduce their grants, one state by as much as 60 per cent. Tax delinquencies running into hundreds of millions of dollars have complicated the situation.² This, of course, raises the whole question of the ability of the states to support an adequate program of education. As pointed out elsewhere, there is a wide variation in their ability to support adequate systems of approximately equal efficiency. New York and Nevada, for instance, could raise from five to six times as much as Mississippi, and the six richest states, considered as a group, are four times as well able as the six poorest to meet the standardized measure of educational need.

Federal aid. Even before the depression, inequalities of wealth among the states had created a movement for federal support of schools in addition to the grants supplied for vocational education under the Smith-Hughes Law. The eight most wealthy states in the nation had in 1930 a wealth per child of over \$31,000; the eight poorest barely reached one eighth this sum — \$3978. Moreover, the ratio of children of school age to the population in the eight wealthiest states was from one sixth to one third lower than in the poorest third of our commonwealths. Indeed, two or three states have practically twice as many children for each 1000 adults as have California and New York. This means that the burden of supplying equally good educational service, even if the resources were equal, would be twice as heavy in the former states as in the

² See the various surveys of this problem conducted under the direction of Professor Paul Mort, of Teachers College, Columbia University. Among the more recent studies are those of Missouri, Ohio, New Jersey, and Maine. Cf. also the National Study of School Finance, *op. cit.*, chaps. vi, viii, and ix. See also the *Relative Economic Ability of the States to Support Education*, by Leslie N. Chism, New York, Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1935.

latter. The states with the largest proportion of children, nevertheless, contribute most to the restocking of the urban population. These figures make the agitation for federal aid for local education, based on democratic principles, quite understandable, and it was such sociological considerations that the President's Advisory Committee on Education stressed strongly in its program of federal aid for education. This program recommended that certain types of aid be given in proportion to the need of the states.¹

Rural school costs. The total bill for public education in 1935-36 was 1,656,000,000 dollars, about one billion of which was spent in urban America. The average per pupil cost for current expenses based on average daily attendance was, in 1931-32, \$64.39 in the open-country and village schools, \$108.93 in the cities. By 1935 these figures had declined to \$55.31 and \$92.68 respectively. Rural costs vary among the regions and between elementary and high schools; up to 1930 they increased slightly in the elementary schools and declined in the high schools as compared with 1924. Between 1930 and 1936, in the communities studied, total operating and teaching costs declined as a result of the depression. In the village centers this decline was 16 per cent in total costs, but 20 per cent in teaching costs. In the open-country schools both items declined almost 30 per cent. There were sharp regional variations in these fluctuations. Per pupil costs in the Middle Atlantic communities by 1936 were slightly above 1930 figures and stood at \$57.83 for all pupils, high and elementary. Southern white schools cost half as much. Southern Negro schools cost per pupil about \$8, only one third that spent for white schools. This fact gives point to the proposal of the President's Advisory Committee on Education that, in states maintaining a dual system of education, federal funds, if appropriated, should be in addition to present budgets and should be distributed in proportion to the school enrollments of the two races.

The size of a community had little or no influence on school

¹ Cf. *Report of the Advisory Committee on Education*, Sections A II and III and B IX. Washington, D.C., 1938.

costs within regions, but these were related to wealth as measured by per capita retail sales: in communities with per capita sales of under \$200 per year, elementary-school teaching costs were \$26.10 per pupil, rising to \$42.80 where sales were between \$400 and \$500, after which there was a slight decline.

Expenses varied considerably according to place. One-room school districts were found in 1930 that operated on less than \$1500 annually, and since the depression there are thousands spending less than \$1000, and many as little as \$600 or \$700 annually. In the 140 villages the median school expense in 1935-36 was \$28,300, exactly the figure in 1923-24. This average, however, includes budgets as diverse as \$18,000 for Southern and \$50,000 for Far-Western villages.

THE PUPILS

The history of American education in the twentieth century has been in part the story of the gradual raising of the compulsory school age, and of the resulting vast increase in child attendance, both rural and urban. This is in effect an increase in the percentage of children over 14, and especially over 17, in school. Table 59 illustrates this point graphically.

TABLE 59. PROPORTION OF CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL BY AGE GROUPS FOR 1920 AND 1930

Age Group	Total U.S.		Urban		Rural		177 Villages	
	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920
7-13.....	95.3	90.6	97.3	94.4	93.3	87.6	96.0	93.9
14 and 15.....	88.8	79.9	92.7	80.7	85.0	79.4	92.1	90.1
16 and 17.....	57.3	42.9	60.5		51.1		72.9	67.1
18 and 20.....	21.4	14.8	22.5		19.4		33.0	27.0

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930.*

This increase in school attendance for every age group was national and affected every region, although, as is the case in many school comparisons, the rural South lagged somewhat behind the other regions. The higher figures for urban areas doubtless reflect the stricter enforcement of attendance laws. The rural gain, apart from the prevailing philosophy of giving

every American boy and girl as much education as possible, can be attributed also to more attractive teaching and more competent teachers, to improved transportation facilities, increase of consolidated schools, better rural health generally, and the lessening of child labor. The ratio of attendance to enrollment also increased, totaling 91 per cent in village high schools, nearly 95 per cent in village grade schools, and 80 per cent in country schools. The total rural figure — village and open country — for 1931-32 as given by the Office of Education is 82.8; the urban figure, 86.4 per cent.

Elementary-school pupils decrease; high-school pupils increase. According to the Office of Education ¹ the number of pupils in rural grade schools declined by 9.4 per cent between 1926 and 1934. In the latter year it stood at 10,821,777 as against almost 12,000,000 in 1926. Even allowing for rural children who now attend schools in places of over 2500 population and who are therefore classed as urban, it seems clear that these figures are an indication of the slackening in the rural birth rate discussed in Chapter VIII. On the other hand, enrollment in rural high schools slightly more than doubled in this period.

Various causes account for this surge of rural youth into high schools, which parallels the urban trend and exceeds it in proportions. The lack of employment possibilities held many in school. Again school principals are reporting less retardation than formerly, with the obvious tendency for more grade pupils to enter high schools and complete their courses. Rural four-year high schools rose in number from 9926, enrolling 794,000 pupils in 1926, to 12,360, enrolling more than a million in 1934, in which year, it is worth noting, only about half of the rural high schools had less than 100 pupils.

This great flood of rural youth into secondary schools began even before the depression. In Illinois the number of persons 16 and 17 years old of both sexes in rural areas decreased from 80,459 to 77,874 between 1920 and 1930; the rural school attendance for these ages, however, increased from 34,911 to 42,211. In Iowa, where the population in this age group was

¹ *Op. cit.*

practically stationary, attendance at school increased one fifth to 60.4 per cent. Similar figures were assembled for every state, showing, in some cases, increases in the proportion attending of more than 40 per cent. As Chapter VII shows, there seems to be a clear relation between the proportion of children in schools and the proximity of the county of residence to a large city.

Farm tenancy seemed to be an influential factor in school enrollment. In a survey of 43 communities in which tenancy had increased between 1924 and 1930, the number of country children attending village grade schools increased 40 per cent, and high schools, 32 per cent. In 26 communities where tenancy decreased these figures were respectively 70 and 100 per cent. Apparently farm owners are more eager than tenants to send their children to the village schools.

It is interesting to note that, while the village school systems reflect the trend toward a rapid increase in high-school enrollment, they show an increase in elementary-school pupils over 1924 of 8.7 per cent, most of which took place prior to 1930. This departure from the national trend is caused in part by increases in enrollment due to consolidation of open-country schools with those in the village and is also an evidence of the stability or even growth of village population.

College attendance of rural youth checked. One result of the depression appears to have been a checking of the trend of rural youth to college. The Office of Education, in its biennial survey 1928-30, reported that well over two fifths of the rural high-school graduates were continuing their education. In 1927 the proportion was 45 per cent, three points higher than for the graduates of all public high schools, urban and rural.

Another indication of rising college attendance from rural areas is to be found in the 1930 Census. In 1920 only 15.6 per cent of the rural youth between 18 and 20 were reported in school; in 1930 it was 20 per cent, in the villages alone, 33.2 per cent. While some of these students were doubtless in high school, most of them were in college. At the same time the proportion of rural inhabitants 21 and over in school in-

creased 135 per cent during the decade, that is, to 299,500 persons. Among Negroes this increase was fourfold: to 36,118 persons.

Between 1924 and 1930 high-school enrollment in the 140 village-centered agricultural communities increased 17 per cent but the proportion of graduates continuing their education rose almost twice as fast. In the next six years high-school enrollment gained almost 36 per cent but the proportion going on to higher institutions of learning rose only 19 per cent. Indeed the proportion of graduates tending toward college declined slightly, from 40.1 to 35.1 per cent.

It is clear that the surge of rural youth into high school, already alluded to, had been paralleled by a movement into colleges and normal schools but that the depression checked the volume of this movement somewhat.

RURAL SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION

The discussion thus far has shown that the country schools have poorer physical facilities, a smaller clientèle, and slightly lower attendance; it will show in the next section that they are staffed by fewer well-trained and more underpaid teachers than the city schools. It has been indicated, also, that village schools are superior to country schools in all these respects. One of the solutions advocated by many educators for bringing country schools up to the level of village and city schools is consolidation.

Consolidation defined. A consolidated school is difficult to define technically, but it may be considered a combination of two or more smaller schools brought together for the sake of greater efficiency and for the purpose of serving all the districts whose schools it has displaced.

Progress in consolidation. The 1920's saw real progress in school consolidation, the number of consolidated schools increasing rapidly from 9752 in 1920 to about 17,300 in 1934.¹ At

¹ Figures corrected to make comparable with previous reports, eliminating thereby effect of changed definition of consolidated school. Cf. Biennial Survey of Education, 1934-36, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-55.

the same time one-teacher schools declined 36.6 per cent, from 189,227 to 138,542. Since 1930 consolidation has for obvious reasons slackened; though according to the latest report of the Office of Education there is a decline of about 1500 rural schools a year. A considerable number of all consolidations, especially where high schools were involved, centered in villages — another evidence of the increasing integration of the rural community around the village.

Advantages of consolidated schools. The advantages of the consolidated school are, in the first place, a large building which provides a room for each grade and space for laboratories and social and recreational facilities, which enrich the whole of community life. Larger school grounds often make possible athletic fields, school gardens, and demonstration plots.

In the second place, the tax base of the consolidated school makes possible better teachers than the old districts afforded, and provides not only the normal recitation period but some degree of subject-matter specialization among the faculty. In other words, instead of having a teacher for each grade, the consolidated school can hire a teacher for each subject. In some states there is special state aid for consolidated schools.

Thirdly, consolidation makes possible better administration and supervision than is attainable under the traditional type of rural school.

Finally, the pupils are benefited in many ways. There are enough children to carry through adequate grading, to develop group and project work, and to organize many socially significant types of extra-curricular activities. Moreover, enrollment and average attendance usually increase.

The costs of consolidation. Consolidation is frequently opposed on the ground of its high cost, which is, of course, reflected in the tax bill. Where the area covered and the population served is adequate, however, there is some doubt as to whether costs are significantly higher except when a too expensive new building is required.

In this connection Arkansas provides an illuminating illustration. There careful surveys were undertaken in practically

every county to formulate plans for county-wide consolidations on the basis of satisfactory local school units. In the main, this program resulted in increased elementary- and high-school attendance, a higher median average salary for teachers, and a raising of their qualifications. In one sample county, Pulaski, the number of schools was sharply reduced, those of one and two rooms being practically eliminated. Per pupil costs declined slightly, while the total budget dropped from \$314,783 to \$290,052 in one year of operation, despite increased transportation costs. Thus not only was money saved but education improved at the same time. Many similar examples could be given.¹ The Arkansas plan has been copied. Its soundness lies in the careful preliminary survey of the situation; consolidated school districts which ignore the natural social and economic patterns and have an insufficient population or tax basis are handicapped from the start.²

Sometimes consolidation means increased rather than decreased costs. Dr. Little studied 223 counties in 15 Southern and Middle-Western States to discover potential economies under consolidation. Only 10, however, showed potential increases up to 10 per cent; the other 213 showed a median decrease of 6.1 per cent and a range of from 0.13 to 27.52 per cent.³ Consolidation, however, often shifts the total burden, making it lighter in some of the former districts and heavier in others.

Opposition to consolidation. Consolidation is opposed for many reasons. Parents object to having their children ride in school buses and wait in bad weather for the arrival of the bus. In some localities, where one- or two-room schools have

¹ Cf. Dawson and Little, *Financial and Administrative Needs of the Public Schools of Arkansas*. State Superintendent of Education, Little Rock, 1930. Also, Dawson, *Satisfactory Local School Units*, George Peabody Teachers College, Nashville, Tennessee, 1934.

² It should be stated, however, that Arkansas has recently dropped the office of county superintendent of schools and is one of the two or three states now (January, 1935) relying most heavily on federal emergency aid to keep its schools open. This retrogression is due more to the depression and the great droughts of 1932 and 1934 than to the reorganization described.

³ Little, *Potential Economies in Reorganization of Local School Units*. Teachers College Bureau of Publications, New York, 1934.

an excellent community program and have become something of a community center, the closing of this school has meant a distinct social loss. Local people feel unwilling to enter as fully into the program of the consolidated school as they did in their own, but this strangeness and aloofness can be overcome in time by school officials.

A compromise plan. Dr. W. E. Sheffer, of Manhattan, Kansas, has proposed an extension of the consolidated plan in what is known as the co-operative school area.¹ He proposes "to close certain one-teacher schools and transport their pupils to those neighboring graded schools which could care for a larger enrollment. Such a procedure would result in the organization of what will be called . . . Co-operative School Areas, which are defined as areas consisting of one-graded school districts with one or more adjacent one-teacher districts whose pupils would be taught in the graded school for a payment made by the respective one-teacher district school boards to the graded school board." The value of this plan can be inferred from the fact that in the school year 1932-33, 1054 schools in Kansas had an enrollment of seven or less, in 2243 ten or less; four in seven Kansas one-room schools have 15 or less, while the average state enrollment in these schools is steadily decreasing; in 1907-08 it was 22.6, in 1930-31, 12. Obviously, this situation is educationally uneconomic and inefficient.

Consolidation by social process. Consolidation is as important in the high schools as in the grade schools. In 1930, the 61 consolidated district high schools in the 140 villages drew 51.4 per cent, and the 79 village high schools not part of a consolidated district 47.2 per cent, of their students from the open country. By 1932 these percentages had risen to 53 and 50 respectively. Regional variations were slight. Even in the village elementary schools more than one fourth of the student body lived in the country. In other words, what is in effect consolidation by social processes is an important element in the picture.

¹ Sheffer, W. E., *The Co-operative School Area in Kansas*. Kansas State Printing Plant, Topeka, Kansas, 1934.

Such a process, however, often raises serious problems for the village or town high school, which perforce educates these country children, but is allowed in many states to charge the school districts from which they come only the per pupil cost as based on current expenses with no allowance for capital costs. This is discussed further from the community point of view in Chapter XXIV. Consolidation is not, of course, a panacea for all the problems and difficulties of rural education. It cannot increase measurably the ability of an underprivileged population to support education, nor can it cope with population sparsity. In the average case, however, its advantages outweigh the disadvantages. In some instances, of course, the one- or two-room school will have to suffice, and indeed it can be made much more useful socially than is often recognized.

Some one-room schools must remain. It is estimated that, because of low population density and topography, it will be impossible to dispense with between 50,000 and 75,000 of one- and two-room schools, as long as people live in the area these schools serve. How, therefore, can these schools be made to yield the maximum social and educational fruit? An example of what can be done with the one-room school under determinative conditions is found in a four-year experiment conducted at Quaker Grove, New Jersey, under the general direction of the Department of Rural Education, Teachers College, Columbia University. In this old type, one-room school, with an unusually large enrollment of 50, various educational methods, intended to produce the greatest educational benefit, were tried. As a result, very few children (and most of them had I.Q.'s below 90) made less than the year's normal progress per grade as measured by the Stanford Tests. The others achieved 1.4 to 4.25 years' advancement per grade.

The work done in this school is not exceptional, although it is unfortunately considerably above the average pupil achievement. The Porter School near Kirksville, Missouri, affords another classic example of excellent work under adverse conditions, an achievement that had favorable repercussions

in the community. Vermont which, because of population and geographical conditions, must continue to have many one-room schools, instituted a campaign ten years ago to improve their conditions through the superior training of teachers, higher salaries, and better equipment and curricula. Certain assets of the one-room school are in this state being turned to good account; the lack of grading allows for more adequate individual attention; some of the school housekeeping is done by the pupils as lessons in home management and a development of a sense of responsibility, while the close association of children of various ages allows the older to help the younger ones.¹

Sometimes it is helpful to distinguish between the attendance unit or area of a given school and the administrative unit. Schools can be consolidated for administrative purposes but remain undisturbed in their relationships and service to their community or neighborhood. Under some conditions this plan works out quite successfully where complete consolidation is impractical or impossible. The unit of attendance, whether an administrative unit or not, should conform to the natural community as educators are increasingly recognizing. Indeed, this is an official recommendation of the New York State Survey of Education.²

It develops, therefore, that while increasing school consolidation is solving many problems, the handicaps of the one-room school can be overcome very successfully if necessary. In other words, the techniques exist for a great advance in rural education when the administrative, financial and teacher-training problems are solved. Since this is so, the discussion turns now to the teacher.

RURAL SCHOOL TEACHERS

Salaries low. Since instruction costs are such a large part of the current expenses of rural schools, it is worth while to

¹ Cf. *Rural Vermont: A Program for the Future by Two Hundred Vermonters*, chap. xiv. The Vermont Commission on Country Life, Burlington, 1931.

² *Education for American Life*, chap. iv. The Regents' Survey, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1938.

inquire into what teachers are paid. The Federal Office of Education gives the following figures as the average annual salaries of rural public school teachers:

	1925	1930	1935
Teachers in one-teacher schools.....	\$761	\$788	\$517
Teachers in two-teacher schools.	754	829	620
Teachers in three or more teacher schools (open country).....	*	980	*
Teachers in consolidated schools..	*	1037	*

* Not given.

In the villages, salaries were slightly higher, averaging \$1373 in 1930 and \$1147 in 1936. The 1936 salaries averaged slightly lower than in 1924 or 1930 in every region except the Middle Atlantic States. The National Study of School Finance found that the salary of all rural white elementary-school teachers in the lowest 10 per cent of the nation's counties in 1930 was less than \$621, the top 10 per cent more than \$1167, and the median fourth ranged from \$788 to \$952.¹

Training. The rural school, it has often been observed, is handicapped by poorly trained, as well as underpaid teachers. Mort, in the National Study of School Finance,² presents figures relative to years of training beyond the *elementary school* based on the records gathered in 1930-31, of 120,000 rural elementary-school teachers. He used rural in the census sense; that is, including communities of less than 2500 in the open country and villages. The 10 per cent lowest counties employed teachers who achieved 4.84 years beyond elementary school, or barely more than a high-school education. The next 23.3 per cent of the counties in the scale employed teachers who had from 4.84 to 5.42 years' education beyond the grammar school; in the middle fourth the range was from 5.43 to 6.03 years, or just around junior college or normal school. The next 23.3 per cent contained teachers with from 6.04 to 6.52 years of higher education. The top 10 per cent exceeded 6.52 years. In other words, one third of these rural teachers had completed normal-school training or more. In the cities of over 10,000

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

population nine tenths of all elementary-school teachers possessed 6 years beyond elementary school, or better, and nearly one fifth were college graduates.¹

There is some correlation between the training and salary of rural teachers, although, for example, Delaware, New Jersey, and New Hampshire do not stand as high above neighboring states in the training as in the salaries of their rural elementary-school teachers. The correlation of training and salary is closer in American villages, which have better trained teachers than the country schools.

Standards improving. The data on the teachers in the 140 communities, together with the testimony of many school administrators, show that the standards of professional preparation for teachers is improving. Even in the village centers one fifth of the teachers in 1924 had received less than the traditional two-year normal-school training. Just over three fifths were college graduates. By 1936 almost two thirds were college graduates, and outside the South only one in twenty had less than normal-school graduation. The same trend was noticeable in the open-country schools, though to a less degree. In 1924 only 4.5 per cent of the white teachers in such schools held college degrees. In 1936 the figure was 21.7 per cent, practically a fivefold increase. Even among the Negro open-country teachers, 6.4 were college graduates in 1936 as against almost none in 1924.²

Reasons for better training. There are four reasons, among others, for this measurable improvement in the professional preparation of village teachers. First: the post-war shortage, which attracted thousands to the profession, has given way to an oversupply in some states. This situation has been sharply accentuated by the depression. Second: state boards of education have been using all their influence to raise the require-

¹ Urban data supplied by Professor E. S. Evenden, Teachers College, Columbia University, director of the National Study of the Education of Teachers conducted from 1930 to 1933.

² It is believed that these data are quite representative of the national situation as those for the 1930 study agreed within two points with the rural findings of the National Study of the Education of Teachers alluded to above.

ments for entry into the teaching profession. This, among other things, is the spur that sends thousands of teachers to summer school in order to get more degrees or certificates. Third: local opinion and boards of education responsive to it have demanded that local children have the best obtainable in teaching skill. Not only civic pride and economic advantage enter into this sentiment, but also the natural desire of parents to give their children the maximum educational advantages.

Finally: there has been a decided tendency to change two- and three-year normal schools into four-year teachers colleges.

It is interesting to note that this improvement in the training of teachers coincides with improved attendance in and greater holding power of the schools, as well as with stronger extra-curricular and community programs. This is not necessarily a matter of cause and effect, but the phenomena are undoubtedly related.

Teachers older. The better training of village teachers was reflected in part in the fact that their average age had increased. The median age rose from 27 to 28 years between 1920 and 1930, but the chief significance in the age statistics is the fact that there was a marked decline in the number of teachers under 21: they dropped from 11.7 to 6.1 per cent of the total number.¹

Turnover of teachers. One problem which the rural school has been unable to solve is the rapid turnover of its personnel. The United States Office of Education estimated in December, 1931, that each year it was necessary to replace two out of every five teachers employed in one- and two-room schools, and three out of every eleven in village schools. In towns of from 2500 to 10,000 the ratio, however, is only one in six, and in cities of from 10,000 to 100,000, one in ten. That this is probably a conservative estimate is shown by another study from the same source² which showed that 62.1 per cent of teachers in one-teacher schools were in their first year and another 17.5 per cent had been in that school less than two years. Large cities

¹ The National Survey of the Education of Teachers shows an average age of village teachers 26.9 years and of open-country one- and two-room school teachers of 24.8 years.

² Gaummitz, *Availability of Public School Education in Rural Communities*. Washington, D.C., 1931. This is based on 22 widely scattered, representative counties.

replace only one in twenty, or 5 per cent of their faculties each year. Acceptance of another teaching position accounts for two fifths of all changes; marriage is a close second cause. In other words, the rural teacher, like the rural minister, moves often, and like him, uses the rural or village job as a stepping-stone to urban employment. If we judge by the 140 villages, there was little improvement in this situation between 1924 and 1930, although since 1930, because of the depression, turnover has declined.

It seems clear that while the teachers of our rural schools leave something to be desired in training and salary, the former situation at least is improving. Naturally this improvement is noticeable first in the villages. It may and probably will spread to the open country. The discussion should now turn to what is the common concern of both teachers and pupils — the curriculum. Before we consider this subject, however, it is necessary to discover how rural education fared during the depression, for on its fate depends the future curriculum of the rural school.

RURAL EDUCATION DURING THE DEPRESSION

The foregoing pages sketched the current educational situation in rural America and have alluded here and there to depression effects. The general picture is one of a steadily improving situation in most particulars. School consolidations are steadily increasing, more and more of rural youth are in high school, teachers are better trained, curricula are being improved, community activities and service are increasing, state aid to rural schools has risen sharply — all this despite some decline in total budgets and sharper drops in teachers' salaries and per pupil costs. Rural America in the large has probably never had such good educational service as at the moment.

But the depression uncovered serious weaknesses in rural education and its administration and the large picture blurs some serious situations. At one time in the early 1930's thousands of teachers were working without salaries, hundreds of

schools had to close, thousands operated on shortened terms. Total expenditures for the nation's schools declined more than half a billion dollars. Classes were curtailed and tens of thousands of teachers were unemployed, while others worked harder than ever before. Salaries dropped to shocking levels and are still indefensibly low for open-country teachers both white and Negro. Capital outlays for new buildings, despite increased enrollments, were 80 per cent below 1926-30 levels in 1934, and much of what building took place was federally aided. In few countries in the world did education suffer as much during the depression as in the United States and especially in its disadvantaged rural areas.

It was not only inevitable but also reasonable that education should retrogress during the depression along with national life in general. But in rural America this backsliding seems to have gone beyond reason and social safety. Two million children have probably been handicapped in their education at a time when democracy is challenged by both fascism and communism, and when it seems especially necessary, since bold experiments in government are being attempted, to sustain rather than to reduce educational agencies in order to combat enemies of our social order.

Reaction of educators to the crisis. Educators have rallied sharply to the defense of our public school system. A Joint Commission on the Emergency in Education was appointed and has conducted a vigorous campaign in defense of the schools. It was able to report in October, 1934, that outside the drought areas the downward trend in expenditures had been checked and that some city systems had restored in part the services previously eliminated, as well as some of the salary reductions.

Rural educators in connection with the 1933 meeting of the American Country Life Association, after surveying national trends, drew up a policy for Rural Education.¹ Their statement showed no defeatism, and called for free public elementary and secondary education of adequate scope, a minimum school

¹ Cf. *Rural America*, November, 1933.

year of 172 days, and trained teachers with an understanding of the social situation and an appreciation of rural life. It declared: "The curriculum for rural areas should represent the most valuable aspects of the social heritage and of contemporary life, organized for growth. The program of instruction should provide for maximum participation of the individual in order that he may enjoy the benefits, share the responsibilities, and overcome the difficulties which grow out of life experiences."

This program asked for instruction in health, English, the physical sciences, social and civic subjects, vocational and cultural education including music, drama, the fine arts, and literature. It has been pointed out that this program does not necessarily entail expansion along traditional lines. Circuit teachers of specialized subjects can be employed for groups of small schools, and correspondence courses can be used in the smaller secondary schools. Class work can be enriched by radio, moving pictures, and slides, and use can be made of community resources for occupational experiences where these experiences cannot be provided effectively within the school building.

Adult education was demanded, both vocational and cultural, through the full utilization and co-operation of the agricultural extension service, vocational teachers, county libraries, university extension and volunteer agencies, such as church and Grange. The report called also for equalized state aid with some federal assistance (although no federal control), the abolition of rural child labor, and an adequate supporting program of research.

One result of the activity of educational leaders in combating the untoward results of the depression was the appointment by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in 1936, of an Advisory Committee on Education. This body of twenty-one persons, representing industry, labor, business, agriculture, and education, made an exhaustive study of public education in the United States on all levels. It pointed out that federal aid to education had long been practiced, especially in relation to

vocational education in high schools, the agricultural colleges and the extension service of these colleges. Its report urged federal aid for education, especially for rural schools, for rural libraries, for state boards of education, and for school buildings. It recommended that sociological techniques be used in determining the boundaries of school districts and, as earlier noted, based many of its proposals on sociological grounds. It is probable that eventually federal aid to education will be granted, but one crucial issue in the discussion will be whether any federal control should follow such grants or whether in a democracy such as ours society can give grants-in-aid and allow them to be administered and controlled by the local community.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. The exercises for this chapter will take the form of committee work. The class will be divided into five committees.

Committee I will present a plan for organizing and administering rural elementary education on a county basis rather than a local district basis.

Committee II will present a plan for consolidating two or more country district units.

Committee III will present a plan for organizing and administering a high school on a town-country community basis.

Committee IV will present a plan for organizing and administering libraries so as to be of greatest service to rural communities.

Committee V will present a policy including editorial, reportorial, and advertising phases for a weekly newspaper, which will make it of greatest service to both its town and country constituencies. The work on the above two committees should be done after studying Chapter XIX and XXIV also.

2. Compare the per capita retail sales for selected villages and towns in a county or selected counties in a state with the per pupil costs of elementary or high schools. Can you discover any relationships?

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A SOCIAL FORCE

THE curriculum of the rural school, like that of its city counterpart, is becoming more pliant with the times; it is forsaking the rigidity of the nineteenth century and attempting to adopt the newer methods and teach more contemporary subjects.

The curriculum today is a tool for educating the child for the world — so far as education can educate; for equipping him with the armor to battle his way through life, wrest a living from it, and to live it more completely than the common man has ever done before. For the glory of American democracy is to give each person — as far as is possible under an infinite variety of economic and sociological conditions — a chance to live life fully, and it is the common free education provided by the state that the nation believes is one of the chief instruments in gaining this fuller life.

Under our very eyes, the rural curriculum is continually changing, trying to catch up with sociological and economic conditions, trying always to achieve the one incontrovertible aim of public education, the greatest good of the greatest number.

Curriculum changes. This aim expresses itself among other ways in an enrichment of the curriculum. Courses are always being added, tried out, and then either continued or dropped.

The schools of the communities studied exemplify this constant change, especially in the centers whose schools, it should be recalled, enroll practically all the farm youth who go to high school, more than one half of all elementary-school children in the community, and 25 per cent of all open-country children. Between 1924 and 1936 over 600 changes in curriculum were made in these village schools. In six out of seven changes a course or department was added; in one of seven a course or department was dropped. There were twice as many changes in the latter half of this period as in the first half. Even these changes do not tell the whole story. Courses dropped because of depression necessities and later restored are not in-

cluded. Moreover, sixteen school systems, more than one tenth of the total number, undertook complete revision of their curricula, one half of them either in co-operation with the schools of education at their state universities or in connection with state-wide programs sponsored by state boards of education.

The open-country schools, largely of the one- or two-teacher type, which enroll nearly three fourths of the open-country elementary-school children, experienced far fewer changes for reasons inherent in the structure and organization of these schools discussed in the previous chapter. Exceptions to this generalization occurred in connection with state programs of curriculum revision and in a few communities where progressive county superintendents of schools had taken the lead in reorganizing the work of the open-country schools. The curriculum of open-country schools was also being enriched in counties or groups of townships where traveling teachers in music and art were employed who visited each school at stated intervals. Better trained teachers were also introducing new elements and methods into these small schools. While there has been less change in these smaller schools than in those in villages, there has been encouraging progress in many open-country situations in this sample of thrice-studied communities.

THE DEVELOPING CURRICULUM

Certain patterns emerged from an analysis of the changes made. The social sciences have become far more important than formerly, included under the headings of sociology, economics, social problems, and social studies. Counting the older term civics, no junior or senior high school lacked some offering in this general field. Compensation for gains in the social studies and the cultural topics was made by dropping Latin, by consolidating various courses in other than American history into a single course in world history, and by offering college preparatory subjects such as physics, chemistry, and higher mathematics every other year.

The next major change related to vocational education in the high schools. The offerings in home economics and agriculture

increased and these departments were found respectively in 115 and 102 of the 140 school systems. Courses in or departments of commercial education multiplied, with 107 schools having such an offering, twice the number in 1924. Graduates from these departments are being turned out far in excess of the power of their communities to absorb them. Despite the depression agitation against so-called "fads and frills," the cultural subjects, often so classified, have survived the depression or been restored to the curriculum. Music was found in six schools out of seven, drama in almost half, and art in two out of five.

The final trend of importance relates to efforts in the direction of vocational guidance, now found in almost half the schools as against none in 1924, and in mental adjustment, including home relations, offerings in this field being found in about one school in twelve.

Vocational education and choices. The great gain in vocational guidance is genuine and important. It reflects a new sense of obligation for youth on the part of the school. But it must be stated that much of the work fell far short of even present-day standards in this relatively new field of socio-educational endeavor. The work was offered by teachers with little specialized training for this task, for most of whom it was an extra chore undertaken because of their sense of the need for some guidance for bewildered youth. But from such beginnings better things can come.

The new development matched a broadened vocational interest on the part of high-school students themselves. In 1936 as in 1924, these were asked as to their vocational choices.²

The marked difference between the two sets of replies was in the far wider scope of the vocational interests of the 1936 group as compared with those of 1924. The boys listed sixty occupations, the girls half as many. This was nearly three times as many for the boys and four times as many for the girls as in 1924. This in itself is significant. It may result in part from the work in guidance. It may be influenced by the great increase in urban newspaper circulation, in the use of the radio,

² The following nine paragraphs relating to vocational guidance have been summarized from an article by Brunner, Lorge, and Price, entitled "Vocational Guidance in Village High Schools." Cf. *Teachers College Record*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 218-29. Dec., 1937.

and in the broadening of school curricula that characterized the 140 villages between 1930 and 1936. It certainly indicates some of the problems for those at work in giving vocational guidance to rural boys and girls.

Not only was the range of choice broader than in 1924, but the relative position of some occupations in the esteem of the high-school seniors had changed. In the first place the number undecided as to their future was 40 per cent among the boys, almost double the 1924 proportion, and 29 per cent among the girls, or about one third more than previously.

Of those who had decided, for the moment at least, on a vocation the preferences in the two years, 1924 and 1936, show these significant findings: The proportion of boys electing agriculture rose from 18 per cent to 28 per cent. This may have been because they felt bound, because of the depression, to safeguard what equity the family had in the farm or because they had no hope of being able to prepare for any other work. The number interested in the professions, of which nine were listed, doubled, rising from 8 to 17 per cent. Business was attracting 9 per cent of the class of 1936 as against 10 per cent in 1924. Engineering, as occupation and as profession, suffered the greatest loss, dropping from nearly 65 per cent in 1924 to 15 per cent in 1936. Aviation, quite naturally, took up part of this loss, with exactly one tenth of the boys hoping to become aviators. Five per cent more were headed for industry. Public service, elected by one boy in 1924, appealed in 1936 to 6 per cent.

Among the girls the most marked change was in the attitude toward teaching, a profession elected by one half in 1924 but by only one fourth in 1936. This is doubtless a reflection of the serious straits in which rural schools and their teachers found themselves during the depression. Nursing gained from 12 per cent to 17 per cent. All other professions, nine in number, attracted 9 per cent as against 6 per cent in the earlier years. Business held its own in attractiveness, securing 39 per cent of the choices in each period. Perhaps to this should be added the 10 per cent of the girls who hoped to become beauticians, an entirely new category, but one not to be wondered at, since the number of beauty parlors in these villages had increased from

almost none in 1924 to an average of 1.25 per village in 1936. Two per cent of the girls expected to be married on graduation as against one third of one per cent in 1924.

It must be remembered that only broad categories have been used here. The girls classified under the general head of business, for instance, include those planning to be stenographers or secretaries, bookkeepers, cashiers, clerks in stores, hostesses, buyers, clothing saleswomen, and dry cleaners. It must also be remembered that the above compilations are based merely on stated vocational preferences of the seniors in the high schools. Many will change their choice either on the basis of wider experience or because of economic compulsion. The most significant aspect of the data is the wider range of interest and choice expressed in 1936 as compared with 1924.

It is quite evident also that these choices bear little relation to the present occupational distribution in these communities. For instance, 89 per cent of the farm male population and 12 per cent of the rural non-farm population were engaged in agriculture in 1930. Trade or business occupied slightly less than one sixth of both males and females, professional and public service 7 and 17.5 per cent respectively of men and women.

If these high-school pupils are going to engage in the occupations of their present choice, many of them must leave home. This, 53 per cent expect to do, which includes two thirds of those who hope to continue their education — a smaller proportion, however, than in 1924, when about two thirds planned to leave home. Part of the explanation for the excess of males over females in rural areas lies here. Sixteen per cent more girls than boys are continuing school. Thirteen per cent more girls than boys expect to leave the community in order to continue their education. Vocational education must assume part of the responsibility for this situation. The important place commercial studies have come to occupy in the curriculum, as noted, is causing secretaries and stenographers to be trained out of all proportion to what the community can absorb. The pupil undoubtedly accepts that fact and expects to migrate. Seventy-one per cent of the pupils choosing this field expect to leave the community.

One interesting finding of the study was that for boys and girls combined, vocational indecision which, as stated, had increased, was one third higher in the schools in which vocational guidance workers had had some professional training for their work than in those schools where they had had none. The proportion of students vocationally undecided in the two groups was respectively 40 and 30 per cent.

This may be due to the larger range of possible vocational opportunities opened to the ken of rural youth by means of the increasing work in vocational guidance or the other factors mentioned above. Many of the possibilities rural youth may not be well acquainted with and hence they remain undecided until they have more knowledge or experience. Again, the increased vocational indecision may be the result of discouragement over the whole economic situation, possibly reflected by the guidance workers as they faced their placement problems. As noted in Chapter XII, there is a considerable amount of unemployment among youth in these villages, and, while the data show village youth are in a better position than farm youth,² in specific and especially disadvantaged situations this may not be appreciated. Finally, the increase in vocational indecision may be due to the inexpertness of the vocational guidance itself, and inexpert it certainly is. It is within the range of possibility that in some schools what guidance was offered may have been worse than no guidance at all.

Similarly, vocational education seemed to have little effect. Among these sixty schools, an almost equal proportion of the boys chose agricultural pursuits where there was vocational agricultural education as where there was no such course offered. Among the girls a higher proportion hoped to engage in work requiring domestic science: 6.9 per cent in schools where there were no offerings in domestic science, and 4.2 per cent in schools where there were. Likewise, the proportion headed for commerce and trade was two points higher where the high school had no commercial courses than where it had.

² Cf. Melvin, Bruce L., *Village Youth*. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. (forthcoming).

All of this points to the extreme importance of the proposal of the President's Advisory Committee on Education,¹ that an Occupational Outlook Service be established to help the United States Employment Service in placing, and the schools in guiding, all youth, rural and urban. Such a Service would warn commercial students that they were preparing for a somewhat overcrowded calling and tell prospective farmers frankly that Melvin's findings show that the number of new farms becoming available each year is only from one third to one half enough to supply the number of farm youth potentially available.

The fundamental problem. It should be remembered, however, that far more fundamental than changes in courses and programs are changes in teaching methods and in the contents of courses. To appraise a course adequately, it would be necessary to answer such questions as: How many modern problems of immediate importance are considered in, for example, the study of civics? How many techniques of contemporary life are treated in the new commercial subjects? What opportunity do teachers have to select content and invent procedures that will lead pupils to a better understanding of some of the pivotal issues of rural life? What conception of social and economic theory do the teachers themselves have?

Unfortunately, the answers to such questions require intensive surveys which have not yet been made. A number of cities and rural districts have, however, made much progress in this direction, and the State of Virginia has revised its whole curriculum after taking these questions into consideration.

Virginia's curriculum revision. The Virginia Department of Education has devised courses of study dealing fundamentally with the major functions of society as they are exemplified in the local community. They study, for example, protection of life and resources, production and distribution of goods and services, consumption, transportation and communication, extension of individual freedom, education, recreation, and the

¹ *Report of the President's Advisory Committee on Education.* Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1938.

expression of esthetic and religious impulses. Within such a framework the rural teacher elucidates the local social and economic organism and then leads the pupils to distant places and times, from the particular and the local to the more abstract and remote. Although this program is excellent in theory, Virginia schools can use the new curriculum only where there is acceptable supervision, often a difficult matter to provide in rural areas at present.

Other tendencies. These innovations and tendencies are by no means confined to Virginia, but are spreading to an increasing number of rural schools. Other states have worked with revised curricula, though often the consideration given the special problems of the open-country schools is inadequate. Interestingly enough, two industrial states, New York and New Jersey, are perhaps more aware of the problems of rural education at present and are facing them more effectively than any others. Curriculum improvement does not depend, however, on state action alone. Many rural schools are doing what they can locally.

Education is promoted and disseminated by means of many activities that utilize the environment: hikes and picnics, dramatics, pageantry and sometimes the cinema. Occasionally the activities of the school are extended through the enlistment of local residents for demonstration and interpretation of activities of historical or immediate social significance. The school is at the service of the community and through parent-teacher associations and other agencies, adult education is being undertaken more and more.¹ In many communities, at the end of the year, the director can report evidence of increasing appreciation of education, not only in the school, but also among the adult population, as well as satisfactory advancement by the pupils from grade to grade.

Legislation and the curriculum. While this is all to the good, there are other influences at work which are not so beneficial. One is the legislative control of the curriculum. Every state

¹ For a discussion of the public school and adult education in rural America, see next chapter.

has at one time or another enacted legislation concerning the curriculum of the public schools. Schools have in this way been directed to do more than fifty different things, and have been restrained from doing as many more. One or more states require special observance of twenty-one different holidays, flag salutes, Bible reading, weekly fire drills, etc. Schools have been commanded to promote patriotism or nationalism, and with regard to the curriculum itself, certain subjects have been made mandatory: drawing in ten states, cotton grading in one, and so on. In all more than one thousand enactments have been placed on the statute books relating to the spending of time in the public schools.

Between 1913 and 1923 there was a 23 per cent increase in the number of such laws passed, and the movement has probably gained since that time. Pressure is frequently exerted upon the legislature to pass laws demanded by special interests. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union began, for example, even in the last century, to advocate laws directing instruction concerning the harmful effects of alcohol; various patriotic bodies have lobbied laws requiring the periodic reading of and instruction in the Constitution of the United States. Sometimes the manner of teaching and the amount of time to be expended are decreed, often in violation of the best pedagogic principles.

Enactments of this kind apply usually with equal force to urban and rural schools. These mandatory duties often work hardship on the rural teacher who has from four to eight grades to teach. Time is lacking for work in the non-subject-matter requirements especially. The compulsory inclusion of music and drawing in the curriculum raises problems for the country teacher, who, however excellent she may be in the fundamental subjects, may have little or no skill in such specialized subjects. Moreover, a small, weak school district may incur considerable expense in obeying such laws. School boards or teachers are faced with the alternative of ignoring the law or of handicapping the conduct of more essential work if the law is complied with. In hundreds of small communities the law

therefore becomes a dead letter, this solution to the problem being admittedly the lesser of two evils.

BROADER BASES FOR THE CURRICULUM

Implications for the curriculum in the social situation. The training given children in public schools is designed to make them useful members of society. Social changes, therefore, as already observed, should be reflected in the curriculum. Indeed there are many persons who feel that the school should anticipate the more important changes and thus even influence or accelerate them.¹

Implications of the migration. The influx of country youth into village high schools requires a reconsideration of the curriculum in terms of the needs of the two groups, the farm children and the village children, each of equal strength and importance. It has been safe to assume in the past that the village boy and girl who did not stay in his home town would head cityward. The exodus of village youth to the city has been greater proportionately than the better-advertised big parade from farm to city, if the house-to-house inquiries of the Institute of Social and Religious Research in a number of villages in 1924 are a basis for judging. A rural high-school training with a distinctly urban slant is therefore quite understandable even though perhaps questionable. It was often contended that farm youths who received such training fifteen or twenty years ago were probably destined to go to the city when they left their ungraded elementary schools. But whether or not such assumptions were correct in 1900 or 1910, are they safe under post-war conditions?

How shall agriculture be taught? The problem cannot be entirely solved by introducing an optional course in agriculture into the high-school curriculum, as was done in from half to two thirds of the 140 villages surveyed. The question thereafter becomes, how shall agriculture be taught, as a discipline

¹ The remainder of this section is based on an article by one of the authors which appeared in the *Teachers College Record* for May, 1930, and on which pages 198-200 of *Rural Social Trends* (*op. cit.*) were also founded.

or a practical subject, as a thing apart or integrated with the rest of the curriculum? Shall it be taught so that the farm-bent youth may learn that agriculture has social relations and obligations, involving processes of marketing in national and world markets? Shall he learn that the carrying on of these processes requires an understanding of economic trends and co-operative movements, in addition to the fundamental skills of seed testing, tree spraying, and all those facts which enter into the productive side of agriculture?

In only a few schools was agriculture taught in such a thoroughgoing way; indeed in more than one fourth of the village high schools the subject was not taught at all. Among these were numbered schools which had once taught it but discarded it for a commercial course, either in order to save expenses or because the agricultural depression created unfavorable sentiment about it. Now that there is an oversupply of candidates for white collar jobs, some of these schools are dropping typewriting and stenography and are welcoming agriculture!

The study of agriculture, however, is not going to disappear from the rural high school because farm land lost nearly half of its value between 1920 and 1932. At present the condition of agriculture is somewhat improved, thanks to the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Moreover, America's shift from a debtor to a creditor nation has tremendous implications for agriculture, an industry which has been shown to be as important to the village as to the farm. Few are the communities which have not witnessed foreclosure and tax sales, which have not received refugees fleeing from hunger in the cities. The causes of these phenomena, the measures for their improvement and eradication, their implications for our national well-being and political organization cannot safely be dodged in the training of rural youth, about half of whom cease full time education when they graduate from high school. Nor is there any reason why adults should not be invited into classes dealing with subjects of such tremendous interest to themselves.

The curriculum and life. But the high-school curriculum must be considered from two other aspects. Where are the graduates going now? What do they intend to do in life? Only the first question can be answered on the basis of the data gathered.

More than half the graduates in 1930 in the 140 villages went to college; seven tenths of these matriculated at degree-granting institutions, universities or engineering schools, liberal arts, agricultural or teacher-training colleges. Obviously, then, the rural high school must be a college-preparatory as well as a life-preparatory institution.

The richness of the curriculum, of course, depends somewhat on financial support. The school is greatly hampered by the taxpayer these days. Moreover, there has been too much guesswork in rural school expansion; it is necessary to institute a searching analysis of community needs before revisions take place. What subjects do the rural schools need, and what can they afford? One of the best arguments for consolidating schools and for centering rural education in the village is that by co-operative support in places of greater wealth, more can be done with the curriculum in a financial way than in the isolated country school. For the consolidated village or country school, if it embraces sufficient territory, offers the best opportunity for rural children to receive instruction from trained teachers and through a rich curriculum.

The migration from farm to city in the 1920's and the reverse migration from city to farm and village in the 1930's raise doubt as to whether the rural school has laid adequate emphasis upon the admitted natural advantages of country life and upon the improved standards of rural living; or does the training it gives deepen the discontent of youth with conditions as they are in the country? After all, these migrations prove that millions of people were dissatisfied with both country and city; mobility may be a mark of freedom and perhaps prosperity, but if mobility becomes an expression of discontent, it means instability. It is well for the curriculum to consider the whole

philosophy and character of rural life, to study it in relation to urban life, and in relation to the ever-changing *zeitgeist*.

Curriculum and social change. This discussion still leaves untouched the question, about which much debate rages in the educational world: can the schools produce or help to effect social change? Sociologists have paid too little attention to the important social forces in the school curricula, although lack of enough concrete data greatly handicaps them in contributing to the solution of this problem. When, however, the matter is geared to the community level, there is much to be offered in the way of enlightenment. Moreover, if the schools are to promote a better social order they will do so in large part through patient spade work in thousands of localities, just as the Agricultural Extension Service contributed to the improvement in the production capacity of American farmers by means of hundreds of thousands of meetings and demonstrations in thousands of farm communities, supplemented by the use of printed matter and auxiliary devices. In short, data exist to prove that on the community and even on the county level the school can achieve miracles in effecting social change when vision, leadership, or social wisdom is provided.

Three cases. One of the most interesting of such case studies comes from the South. The status of public education in this county in the early 1910's was typically backward. The county superintendent, bent on progress, took his case to the voters, but his program was rejected. He changed his tactics completely. He began to use what assets he had. School entertainments and other social events designed to promote education were held. Field days, exhibits, beautifying campaigns, prize awards and such things, were instituted in order to interest the community in social improvement by means of better schools. The school superintendent preached his gospel to the farmers who gathered in their buggies and buckboards at these affairs. Most important of all, the superintendent inspired the pupils themselves with his beliefs. In 1919, about seven years after his proposal was defeated at the polls, the turn in

public favor began. The older students demanded better schools, the younger citizens voted for it. Some of the parents began to change their minds. By 1920-21 the school budget had tripled as compared with 1916-17. Nine modern school buildings had been erected, and consolidations began to take place. There had formerly been only one school with work above the seventh grade; 31 now had added from one to four grades to reach the same level. The curriculum was revised and made more flexible. Vast changes are now impending in this county, which lies within the Tennessee Valley. It is much better prepared for the approaching changes than would have been the case without this far-sighted, educational strategist.

A second case study is Cattaraugus County, New York, where for eight years ending in 1931, county-wide health demonstration was financed by the Milbank Fund. Paralleling the county health organization itself there developed three other movements:

1. A school program including full medical examinations, nutrition work, clinics, attention to the heating and ventilating equipment of the schools, and instruction of the pupils by the school nurse.
2. A program of popular health instruction through the press, speeches before clubs, churches and other organizations, posters and the like.
3. Co-operation with the social service agencies for specific work with the cases handled by such organizations.

This program achieved certain definite and measurable results. Cattaraugus County high-school students attained grades in health preferences and habits superior to those of a control group in another county. Death rates in the community had by 1929 decreased for all ages up to 54 when compared with 1920-22, especially for those less than a year old (41 per cent), for ages 1 to 4 (31 per cent) and 15 to 44 (27 to 36 per cent). "The mortality rates for diphtheria, tuberculosis, and the diseases of infancy dropped so sharply and suddenly, and to a degree involving a deviation from previous

trends so pronounced as to be far beyond any reasonable influence of chance.”¹

It is interesting to note that this work proceeded on the basis not only of a health survey but as an exhaustive social investigation covering among other things, the history of the community, economic conditions and income, and a careful analysis of the racial, age, and sex composition of the population. Here, then, is a case in which, under outside stimulus, education of many sorts, of children as well as adults, resulted in important changes affecting the health of an entire county.

Let us take another illustration. Nestled in the southwestern foothills of the Appalachian Highlands, there existed for many decades a small village, away from the railroad, but at the nucleus of many roads leading up into the mountains. During a great part of the year these roads were impassable and the district isolated. Strangers were regarded suspiciously as recently as 1924. By 1930 the population of the village and its trade area had doubled. Roads had been improved and open-country schools were consolidated with the village school. Strangers found the inhabitants approachable and in greater contact with the outside world. Farm and domestic conditions had also definitely improved.

Behind this transformation was the school, and particularly an agricultural teacher and the principal. After some individual propaganda, they opened a few courses for adults. They instituted a county fair, and revived all-day sings and community picnics. They invited everybody to visit the school building in the evenings to listen to a radio which had been installed. They improved and modernized school methods. In time a service club was started, which helped to expand the school and community program and revitalized the church. In 1930 there was a complete school survey, far more sociological than is usual, on the basis of which a new educational program was developed.

The curriculum, therefore, is a matter of great social im-

¹ Facts from surveys in the county in 1923 and 1930 made under the author's direction and from Winslow, *Health on the Farm and in the Village*.

portance. The recent changes in sample communities show adaptations to educational and general trends but no thorough-going thinking through of the larger social implications. In specific communities, however, the question of whether the school can change social conditions has been answered in the affirmative.

Extra-curricular activities expanded. In this discussion of the curriculum it should not be forgotten that schools are recognizing the potential educational value of leisure time and have organized an increasing number of extra-curricular activities, especially in consolidated and village schools where numbers permit it, and to a certain extent, even in the smaller country schools.

The chief activity is athletics, now frequently under the control of a director of physical education. Musical affairs have tended to increase, too, particularly orchestras and glee clubs, which were found in from two thirds to three fourths of the high schools of the 140 village communities. One sixth also had bands. The development of music can be traced to the influence of state universities, some of which conduct annual high-school band, orchestra, or glee club contests.

Dramatics has now found a place in virtually all high schools, and nearly half of them give some attention to pageantry. About three fifths, that is, nearly twice as many as in 1924, have organized debating. There is an increased interest on the part of parents in this forensic and dramatic activity, an interest carefully nursed by the school authorities. Attendance at all public school functions was reported to be rising, especially where roads had been improved and the school made accessible. There was clearly an encouraging increase in both the open-country and the village part of these communities in the contribution of the schools to the social and cultural life of their communities. Poor, discouraging, even bad situations still existed, but the trend was one of improvement and progress. This trend is important, for it shows the broadening concepts of education within the school and the enlarging place of the school as a factor in community life, another evidence of which will be discussed in connection with the social significance of adult education.

Summary. These two chapters have shown the various trends and tendencies of rural public education in our century, with emphasis on developments within the last two decades, decades during which rural education, like urban education, has made tremendous strides. Perhaps the achievements of greatest importance were the consolidation movement and the resulting centralization of educational opportunity for rural people in villages and towns. We have recorded, at least up to 1940, a steady improvement in the professional preparation of rural teachers and a consistent lowering of per pupil costs. We have noted also a tremendous increase in enrollment and attendance, especially in high schools, and a marked tendency for more rural youth, especially from the villages, to continue their education at college or at other institutions above the high-school level. We have described the movement for a more socialized curriculum, and for a closer relation of the curriculum to practical life, not omitting to notice that everywhere education was embracing more and more cultural subjects, in the interests of a fuller emotional and spiritual rural life.

It has been indicated that the influence of the state in local school administration is steadily increasing, especially in matters of teachers' qualifications, the erection, remodeling and maintenance of buildings, and in courses of study and curricula. Finally, we have sketched the inroads made by the depression on rural education (so far as they are known) and the battle being waged by educators to keep education from sliding backwards because of the hostility of taxpayers in an acute economic situation.

Our record has, however, left out of account one highly important and advancing movement in modern education, namely, the instruction of adults. It is gradually being recognized that social and technological change is so rapid that even college education can no longer impart final technical skill in vocational subjects; much less can it impart a general knowledge sufficient for all adult life in this Gargantuan twentieth century with its revolutionary conception of science and the physical world, a conception involving volcanic changes

in the social, political and economic fabrics. The issues which disturb the statesmen of the 1930's, and on which the voters must pass judgment, were unknown or scarcely heard of twenty years ago. At that time, for example, the gold standard was unchallenged, war debts unknown, farm bankruptcies and tax sales rare, federal relief for millions of unemployed and agricultural processing taxes and crop control inconceivable — to name only a few of the cataclysmic issues of the present day. Another powerful force in promoting adult education is increased leisure because of unemployment and shorter working days made possible by technological advance, involving farm and factory alike. Hence adult education has assumed a remarkable importance, and to this subject the discussion will turn in the next chapter.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Should rural high schools restrict their teaching of agriculture to the production and marketing phases? Defend your opinion.
2. List five or six of the most important social changes affecting American rural life and indicate the curriculum implications growing out of each of these changes in terms of either elementary school, junior high school or senior high school.
3. Block out the main outlines of a course of study in high-school civics, sociology or economics that would meet the point of view expressed in this chapter.
4. Secure from your own high school or from schools near your institution outlines of courses of study in the social studies field. What trends do these show? How adequately do they meet the current situation judged either from the point of view of the chapter or from your own point of view if it differs from that expressed?

REFERENCE READINGS

General

There is a very large literature on various phases of the curriculum and its construction. Little has been written, however, from the specifically rural point of view. The following general works are important because of specific or general implications.

Baldwin, B. T., *Farm Children*. An investigation of rural child life in selected areas of Iowa. New York, Appleton, 1930.

- Bruner, Herbert, *Some Suggestions for the Study of Modern Problems*. Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, New York, 1934.
- Counts, George S., *The Social Foundations of Education*. New York, Scribner's, 1934. Especially Part I, chapter I; Part II, chapter II; Part III, chapter III.
- Dunn, F. W., "Adjustment of the Elementary Curriculum to the Schools of Extremely Isolated Areas," *Teachers College Record*, February, 1931.
- Harap, Henry, *Economic Life and the Curriculum*. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1927.
- Holloway, W. J., *Participation in Curriculum Making as a Means of Supervision of Rural Schools*. Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, New York, 1927.
- Wofford, K. V., *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1938.

Some of the newer courses of study based on recent and thoroughgoing curriculum studies and reorganizations are also suggestive. Many of these can be obtained free or at a nominal cost from the superintendents of the school systems of issuance. A few of the most valuable from the point of view of this text are:

- Dunn, F. W., *Problems Involved in Curriculum Adaptations*, Bureau of Education Bulletin, no. 24, pp. 38-43. Washington, 1927.
- Dunn, F. W., and Bathurst, E. G., *Guide and General Outline, Social Studies for Rural Schools*. Teachers College Bureau of Publications, New York.
- National Education Association, Department of Rural Education, Washington, D.C., *Organization of Curriculum for One-Teacher Schools*. February, 1933.
- South Dakota State Department of Public Instruction, Pierre, South Dakota, *Social Studies Course of Study for Primary Grades*, 1931.
- South Dakota State Department of Public Instruction, *Social Studies Course for Intermediate Grades*, 1932.
- South Dakota State Department of Public Instruction, *Social Studies Course for Upper Grades*, 1932.

Those interested in pursuing the problem of the curriculum further, especially with reference to the social studies, are referred to the Curriculum Laboratory, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, Professor Herbert Bruner, director. There are upward of 100,000 courses of study on file in this laboratory, a great majority of which have been analyzed and evaluated. Extensive bibliographies are available. The Department of Rural Education of the same institution also has extensive material on tested courses in various types of rural schools.

CHAPTER XIX

ADULT EDUCATION

ONE of the chief social developments of the great depression has been a heightened interest in adult education. In a time of rapid spiritual and material change, it is argued, the schools and colleges cannot give youth a complete cultural and vocational equipment for life. The intellectual climate alters profoundly from the time of adolescence or young manhood to the time of middle age. Technological progress renders some trades quickly obsolete and creates others for which labor has to be trained. The progress of world events precipitates problems not envisaged in the curricula of educational institutions a few years ago; witness the New Deal and its novel sociological and economic implications. Moreover, mankind seems to be on the threshold of greater leisure than has yet been enjoyed by the masses, and if this is actualized, there will be sufficient time for adults to continue their education.

The adult education movement is rather new. The American Association for Adult Education was founded barely a decade ago. It subtends a score or more of educational fields, involving vocational, cultural and recreational activities, designed to help in the solution of personal and group problems, and carried on by public and private agencies.

THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

The largest and best financed division of adult education is entirely rural in nature: the tax-supported Agricultural Extension Service, whose administration and subsidy are a joint effort of the United States Department of Agriculture, the State Agricultural Colleges, county governments, and in some states, local farmers' organizations. It was organized in its present pattern under the Smith-Lever Law in 1914, but had

begun to develop a decade before, and expanded enormously during the World War.

The budget and staff. The total budget for this work reached its peak in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1938, when \$32,400,000 was expended. Of this \$18,300,000 was contributed by the Federal Government and the rest from sources within the states and territories.

On December 31, 1938, the employed professional personnel numbered 8750 persons, including 450 boys' and girls' club workers. The normal staff for adult work, therefore, numbered 8300 on this date. Of these, over 1100 are technical specialists attached to state staffs, over half of them devoted to agronomy, dairying, poultry, publicity, horticulture, animal husbandry, and marketing.¹

Objective of the Extension Service. The aim of the Extension Service is to educate the farmers in all the facets of his occupation: it is practical to the core, such education being both technological and commercial, as a study of the preceding list of subjects will show. The Extension Service fulfills its aim by assimilating and disseminating the technical data and research discoveries of the colleges of agriculture and their experiment stations, through the state specialists who relay it by way of county agents to the ultimate consumers, the farmers and their wives.

This system now functions in almost all of the counties of the nation, as the following table on the proportion of counties served shows:

Year	Per cent of Counties	
	Served by Men Agents	Served by Women Agents
1915.....	37.0	11.4
1918.....	79.3	55.8
1920.....	66.2	25.5
1925.....	69.1	30.2
1930.....	77.2	43.3
1934.....	91.1	41.8
1938.....	96.0	60.0

¹ The remainder are allocated among the following subjects: agricultural engineering, animal diseases, child care and training, clothing, entomology, exhibits, extension schools, farm management, forestry, health and sanitation, home economics (general), home furnishings, home management, nutrition, plant pathology, poultry, publicity, rodent pests, and rural organization.

Accomplishment. The amount of work accomplished is impressive. County agents actually visit more than a million and a quarter farm homes annually, conduct about 900,000 group meetings and arrange over a million demonstrations (by men and women) on an almost infinite number of projects. One of the most illuminating features of the work, the success of which has made it indispensable, is the voluntary recruiting of about 407,500 men and women as unpaid local group or project leaders, each one of whom contributes, on the average, two or three weeks each year. Training conferences for volunteer assistants are held by official leaders. So successful has the Extension Service been that a number of countries, notably Japan and Australia, have emulated it.

Despite rapidly changing economic and social contours in rural America, and the provision of added funds for the Service, the proportion of time and money spent on the various aspects of the work changed but slightly, at least up to 1930. There was little difference in departmental arrangements even among the geographic regions. The increased service has been spread fairly evenly. Community activities have taken six per cent of the total time since 1925.

This fact, by the way, lends support to the criticism that the Extension Service program is highly standardized and inflexible in meeting changing needs. It must be remembered, however, that widely divergent activities may be actually conducted under each of the categories officially summarized. Adaptation to depression conditions must certainly have been made, particularly in home demonstrations. President Roosevelt's Agricultural Adjustment Program would probably not have succeeded if the Extension Service had not already created the machinery, the channels, and the contacts for conveying governmental plans to individual farmers, though preoccupation with that program at the expense of more usual activities is a matter of concern to the Land Grant Colleges Association. In 1937, 15.5 per cent of the agents' and specialists' time was used on the A.A.A. and comparable programs.

The concern over the effect of the new programs of the De-

partment of Agriculture on Agricultural Extension is not only due to the interference of such projects with the former routine of Extension activities and teaching. It is due also to the fact that the A.A.A. and soils program call for action, and there is some fear that the county agricultural advisers or agents will be held responsible for getting desired action. Should this happen, it would interfere with their educational function and with the objectives of the Service to bring all pertinent information to bear on subjects of vital concern to the farm population, but to allow individuals to reach their own decisions. This issue is an excellent illustration of the impact of changing conditions upon a social institution and of the demands, resistances, and tensions which are part of the process of reaching decisions. It is worth pointing out that such a clash of opinion as to the function of a tax-supported adult education agency could arise only in a democracy. Under a dictatorship the agency would do what the central government ordered or it would cease to be.

Results of extension work. Among the known results of the Service are the facts that between one third and one half of all farm homes are reached by it; several million persons have been assisted in solving their occupational and home-economic problems through information acquired from it; changed agricultural practices have resulted from it and the increased efficiency of American agriculture may be partly ascribed to it; co-operative action has been stimulated, local leadership developed, and community improvements furthered. Of late, the Extension Service has attempted interesting excursions into recreational or cultural fields, in music and drama, for example, and to some extent in literature and art.

Significant recent developments. One of the most interesting recent developments has been the organization of groups all over the country for the discussion of public affairs which in a democracy must be understood by citizens if effective decisions are to be made. Opinions on such issues are too often influenced by propaganda and are formed on the basis of meager evidence. No national summary of the program has been

issued as plans and procedures varied widely, but in 1936 four fifths of the counties in twenty-nine Middle and Far Western States were organized. In typical states there were 10 groups per county. In one Southern state there were over 500 local groups and almost every county was reached. In this state 38 persons per county attended discussion leaders' training conferences. Discussion materials were prepared and distributed by both the federal and state agencies, in which every effort was made to present various alternative proposals impartially. One of the most significant aspects of this enterprise lies in its effort to help citizens make up their minds as to public issues. It is designed to equip them to act or vote on the basis of all the major facts in any given situation.

County planning. Another recent development has been the holding of conferences to work out programs for agriculture and rural life on a county-by-county basis. Some two thousand counties a year have participated in this project. One criterion for such planning in many but unfortunately not all states, is the use of land in such a way as to win a better material and non-material standard of living. These conferences have the advantage of bringing together all the forces of a county interested in rural welfare.

Expanded social program. Because of the depression and a developing philosophy of adult education, much of the work in clothing, nutrition, health, home furnishings, and similar phases of home demonstration became less merely technical and more and more socialized. In several states the emphasis was placed on appreciation of beauty in the home and a utilization of materials at hand. It is impossible to do more than illustrate this trend. Thousands of families in the aggregate renovated furniture, resealed chairs, rehung pictures, and refinished floors and walls. Home Bureau clubs made tours to museums and to attractively furnished homes. Art exhibits were arranged and circulated among the groups. In one state, two thousand persons were enrolled in a project that eventuated in home flower gardens and so-called outdoor living-rooms.

Nutrition work grappled with the problem of adequate diet in the face of declining income, and this activity quickly expanded beyond the home and into the school. In Massachusetts, for instance, the

Extension Service co-operated in a study of the school-lunch situation along with the State Departments of Education and Public Health, the P.T.A.'s, and the Federated Women's Clubs. As a result, a co-operative effort was made with the W.P.A. to serve a hot dish in the schools to supplement lunches brought from home.

In Missouri, 249 Home Bureau clubs supplied hot dishes or whole lunches daily to more than 6500 children in 344 rural schools. In addition, 412 Home Economics Extension clubs assisted in improving the plane of nutrition in their communities from which W.P.A. nurses had reported some thousands of cases of malnutrition among children. These instances are simply illustrations of a wide variety of activities stimulated by Home Economics Extension and carried through by the local groups under their own leadership. One interesting development growing out of all this has been greatly increased attention to the knotty problem of consumption and consumer education.¹

More concern with consumption. The word *consumption* as here used is related both to the individual and the community standard of living, and includes material goods, social utilities, and non-material spiritual and esthetic values. The criterion for production and farm management, as a number of farm groups as widely separated as South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Connecticut have recently announced, therefore, becomes the usage of land in the light of available consumer markets in such a way as to secure a desired standard of living, including both material and non-material elements. These matters were alluded to in Chapter XVI. The announcements referred to, superficial as experts may consider them, are a long step forward; and the fact that these meetings were held under Extension Service auspices is an encouraging sign.

*Child development and parent education.*² It is a short step from such projects to the whole field of child development and parent education, and extension has taken that step. There is now a

¹ Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 185-86. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

² The following five paragraphs and four lines of the sixth paragraph, with the exception of some of the paragraph headings, are quoted from Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 187-91. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

specialist in this field on the national staff, and 21 states have also employed state specialists. The programs are varied, and reflect somewhat the interests of the state specialist in charge, the needs of the local co-operating groups, and the age of the activity.

Leisure-time activities increase. But perhaps the greatest development has taken place in the field of leisure-time activities, especially those of drama, music, art, reading, and recreation. This type of work also antedated the 1930's, but developed surprisingly, especially in the present decade.

Of the 40 states responding to a questionnaire, 32 had well-defined programs in general recreation, and the other 8 were all doing "a little." Drama was part of the program in 26, music in 20, arts and crafts in 12, reading in 8, training in speech in 2, and folk-dancing in one. In 3 other states nothing is being done along these lines, because such activities are cared for either by the state universities or by the state board of education.

A list of the total number of recreational activities would tax the space available for this chapter. Games of many kinds are included, both group and athletic, for home and community, as is dancing, especially folk-dancing. Home-talent chautauquas are frequent. . . . Twenty-four states hold state-wide or district institutes or schools for the local volunteer recreation leaders.

Drama. Most interesting, perhaps, of recent developments has been the great interest in drama. The training of local leaders has proceeded in the same way as with recreation. Literally thousands of rural groups have participated. Many of the colleges of agriculture maintain loan libraries of plays to assist groups in their selections. In one Middle Western state alone, 4040 plays were lent to such groups in 1935. But many of the plays are original (often the work of farmers' wives) and utilize local materials. Some of these are of very good quality. Some states are stimulating the development of the drama by holding play-writing contests; and these report that the quality of the manuscripts submitted improves with each year.

In the best organized states, the local groups put on county drama festivals, and the best companies, or those with the most significant plays, are selected from the entire state to appear at the state college during Farmers' Week.

In several states, especially in the Middle West, the number of persons actively engaged in the drama program exceeds 4000 a year. In 1939 North Dakota celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the drama work of their Little Theater, originated

and directed through all these years by Professor Arvold. The work in North Dakota influenced Professor F. H. Koch, who went to the University of North Carolina and organized the Carolina Playmakers in 1920, a group which has exercised a national influence on rural drama. Their original plays have been folk plays mainly, indigenous to the soil, built of the mores, traditions, and lives of the people of the state. Now there are in the state 100 high-school and 60 adult dramatic clubs.

Music and art. In the other cultural activities of the Extension Service, the set-up is much the same as in that for the drama. This is true in reference to organization, leadership training, and county or regional festivals or demonstrations, as well as to the appearance of local orchestras, bands, choruses, glee clubs, opera groups, and the like at state college Farm Weeks, or at state fairs, or on radio programs. These enterprises are being carried on in twenty states, and are therefore second only to drama in their popularity. The Extension Service assists, not only in training, but also in organizing, such groups when requested.¹

An illustration of growing musical appreciation among farm people came as a result of an experiment of the Iowa State College radio station in broadcasting popular and classical music. Of 10,000 responses tabulated, 9634 persons preferred the latter.²

Rural sociological extension. A significant development is the addition of extension rural sociologists to the staffs of twelve colleges of agriculture, who devote themselves largely to community organization and relationships. In Iowa, for instance, the 1932 program included 12 types of recreational activities, 261 meetings and 56 local leader-training conferences dealing with community structure and planning, and assistance to churches and other types of institutions through surveys and community-planning programs.

Despite the small number of state employees in this field,

¹ Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 192-93. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

² Quoted from *The American Magazine of Art*, December, 1929.

county extension agents conduct some such work, the aggregate of which is very large. In 1931, according to the *Report of Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics in the United States*, issued by the Department of Agriculture, recreational activities were developed or assisted in 10,697 communities, and over 1000 localities established community houses or rest rooms; 6558 county-wide or community plays or pageants were presented, some of them by 4-H and not strictly adult clubs.

The general objective of rural sociological extension is to stimulate specific activities contributing to the development of human values and rural talent, and to assist rural people in developing and co-ordinating their various groups and institutions in relation to their priority and emphasis in community building.

University extension. State universities are also playing their part in rural adult education, not merely by sending lecturers into rural communities but also by inducing a constantly increasing number of people to take their correspondence courses. In one Wisconsin village one fifth of the adult population were thus enrolled in 1930. Universities send out study-guides for clubs, news letters and package libraries of pamphlets, articles and clippings on matters of current interest. A number of state universities as well as colleges of agriculture maintain radio stations or are allotted regular time by commercial stations.¹

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Many leaders see in the public schools an instrument for widespread adult education. In the cities, it is observed, public schools have long catered to adults by holding night sessions in vocational and primary subjects, thus combating illiteracy and augmenting the technical equipment of artisans and laborers.

¹ Cf. Tyler, T. F., *An Appraisal of Radio Broadcasting in Land Grant Colleges and State Universities*. National Committee on Education by Radio, Washington, D.C., 1933.

Extent of illiteracy. The problem of illiteracy bulks large in rural America, which has altogether 6.9 per cent illiterates among the rural farm population 10 years of age and over, and 4.8 per cent in the rural non-farm population, and this in spite of the fact that in the Middle-Atlantic and Middle-Western regions less than 1 per cent of the population 10 years of age and over was illiterate in 1930, and the figure in the Far West was only 1.4 per cent. The good record of these areas is brought down by the South, in which more than 20 per cent of the Negroes and nearly 4 per cent of the white population are classified as illiterate. Moreover, many adults enumerated as literate are not functionally so. It is estimated that one eighth of the adult population of the United States (one half of them rural) is unable to read newspapers and simple books with any real understanding, thus handicapping the efforts of the Extension Service agents, social workers, and others. The emergency adult education program under the W.P.A. has made an excellent record in eliminating illiteracy, especially in the South, since 1934. But while this is a specific need, the general reasons for the present cumulating interest in adult education are as operative in rural as in urban America. The public school, in meeting such needs, is not only an omnipresent institution but is, moreover, not confined to specific educational activities like the Extension Service.

Perhaps the best example of large-scale adult education is to be found in Delaware, where at state expense hundreds of classes are held each year between October and March. Any ten or more people may form a class on any desired subject. Vocations, art (including music), and public affairs are predominating subjects. As many as five thousand people a year attend such classes in rural Delaware; in addition, work in Americanization and elementary English, from which the larger scope of subjects grew, are continued. The cost of this program is about one per cent of the total expenditures of the state department of education.

Increasing adult education interest in village schools. Only nine schools in the 140 village-centered rural communities were

offering courses for adults in 1924. In 1936 there were offerings in 44, with an average of 2.5 courses per school and a total of 20 topics. The adult enrollment in each averaged 81.4 and more than four fifths completed the work. The longer a school had had adult education work, the more courses it was likely to offer.

The program was heavily weighted on the vocational side, four fifths of the courses falling in this category. This is undoubtedly due to the presence of Smith-Hughes Law vocational teachers in the village schools. Their professional organization and the Office of Education at Washington promote such adult activities. As a result in only a few schools was a balanced program found. The offerings, while supported as indicated, bore little relation to the normal distribution of adult education offerings in other types of communities, to the expressed interests of adults where secured, or to the balance of the day-school curriculum. If the schools are to contribute as they might to adult education, the number of general and cultural courses should be increased without reducing the vocational offerings.¹

That such a development would be welcomed by the rural adults seems to be indicated by the experience of the emergency adult education program of the W.P.A. There were many problems with this program in the very nature of the case. The teachers were poorly trained for adult work. The turnover was high. The relief rather than the educational features were emphasized by administrators and the choice of offerings was dependent on the interests and skills of the relief teachers. Nonetheless, non-vocational subjects made up from one third to one half the offerings and these were distinctly popular. In the communities where local educators judged the work "fair" to "good," and in which the programs continued more than one year, the enrollment had increased to 138 per village, or over 46 per cent above the first year, and the proportion completing

¹ For a full discussion of the regular adult education program in village schools, with descriptions of some of the better programs, see Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 218-28. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

courses was higher than in the regular adult courses supported by the schools. Apparently the potential future of adult education in village-centered rural communities is large.¹

Another evidence of this is that throughout the country increasing interest in adult education is manifesting itself in forums, discussion groups, lyceums using university extension lecturers, all of which center about the public school. A few schools and some community organizations are reporting the use of surveys and so-called "interest-finders" to discover the educational and leisure-time needs and wants of adults in their localities.² Parent-teacher's associations, now existing in about half the village schools and perhaps one fifth of the open-country schools, and affiliated with state federations, are entering into adult education work with leadership and program materials supplied by the latter. Membership seems to be increasing; in 1930, village associations averaged 112, more than two thirds of the members being women.³

Nor is the open country, well served as it is by Agricultural and Home Economics Extension, standing still with respect to adult education. Typical of many adult education enterprises is the following instance from an Ohio hamlet of some two hundred people. The local leader of the annual farmers' institute enlisted the co-operation of the school and arranged for a program covering public affairs, taxation, psychology, and several technical courses in agriculture and home economics. Instructors in a near-by college were very willing to co-operate, and extension service experts were also drawn upon. The cost was \$1.25 per *family* plus the cost of lighting and heating the school. The enterprise was highly successful and is being continued.

¹ For a critique and evaluation of the emergency adult education program, with illustrations, see Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-40.

² Cf. Hudson, Robert, *Radburn: A Plan for Living*. New York, American Association for Adult Education, 1934.

³ See closing pages of chapter for a discussion of the emergency program of adult education initiated by the Federal Government in 1933.

RURAL LIBRARIES

Although proof is increasing that in urban communities the public library is a vastly important agency of adult education, it has long been known that rural America was largely without library service. An American Library Association study in 1926 revealed that 86 per cent of the rural population had no access to public libraries, as against 5 per cent in the cities. Since that time some real progress has been made in the country, but the proportion of persons without library service is still over 75 per cent. Rural library needs are being satisfied in a number of ways.

Community libraries. Many localities have libraries of one sort or another, especially in New England, where about 1400 libraries are to be found outside of cities, often, however, pathetically inadequate. The unit of service is "the town," or township, as it is called elsewhere. In Massachusetts and Rhode Island no town lacks at least one library. A Massachusetts town somewhat above the average, of about 5000 people, with an area of about 50 square miles, possesses a main library, three branches, over 12,000 books, and has an annual circulation of more than 30,000. The budget is about \$5500 or \$1 per capita. An article in the weekly newspaper introduces the new books to the community, and best-selling fiction and non-fiction books are now topics of conversation. New England, as a matter of fact, has four fifths of all American township libraries. The remainder, about 500 in number, have largely followed the migrant New Englander into New York and some Mid-Western States, notably Indiana.

Elsewhere the problem of rural library service is more difficult; in some states, particularly in the South, it has been helped by opening school libraries to the general public. Such libraries, however, have been built up with specific educational objectives in view and seldom meet the needs of the general reader unless special attention is paid to him.

The village situation. The study of 140 villages showed that about three fifths of them had a local library, although the pro-

portion in the South was only one fourth and in the Far West, four fifths. The higher the retail sales in a community, the more likely it was to have a library. Larger communities were better supplied than smaller ones. Twenty-four communities had school libraries open to the public and twenty-one at periodic intervals received traveling libraries from the State Library Commission or a comparable agency. Some of these makeshift efforts at library service were quite successful. One school in a community of 2300 population with 2800 volumes reported a public circulation of 40,000 volumes in 1936. The circulation seems also to be increasing slowly among the total population and certainly among those who are borrowers.

TABLE 60. CIRCULATION OF BOOKS PER INHABITANT, BY REGION — 140 VILLAGES

	Circulation per Inhabitant *		
	1924	1930	1935
Middle Atlantic.....	2.9	2.7	3.7
South.....	1.1	0.5	0.9
Middle West.....	3.0	4.8	4.9
Far West.....	3.6	4.5	4.3

* Circulation per borrower increased from 9.6 per year to 14.6 in 1930 and 16.3 in 1935.

The income of these libraries was small, averaging 31 cents per inhabitant in the total community, with the South showing only 5 cents. Most of the available money came from tax sources, though one sixth of the libraries were entirely financed by memberships and contributions and another one eighth had to supplement tax funds by other means. The average library in these communities had 4835 books in 1936, a gain of 18 per cent over 1930 or just half the rate of gain between 1924 and 1930.

These libraries, like many other of rural America's social institutions, are located in the village or town center of the community, but they have not made nearly as effective an appeal to the open-country population as have other agencies. Outside the Middle West the ratio of open-country borrowers to population was less than 5 per cent. In the region named it was almost 25 per cent. Among villages, outside the South,

more than one half the population were borrowers. Circulation per borrower was steadily increasing. It went from 9.6 books a year in 1924, to 14.6 in 1930 and 16.3 in 1936. Circulation per inhabitant was 4.3, about half the American Library Association's standard for places of less than 10,000 population.

Local library leadership. These local libraries, spreading over three fifths of our villages, a majority of them not connected with county systems and a minority unaided by tax funds, are significant vanes in the progress of national culture. Judged by professional standards, they are usually woefully inadequate. But behind each is likely to be the devotion and perseverance of a Woman's Club, a Ladies' Aid Society, or a similar organization whose members keep the library going by their volunteer, unpaid continuous service, year in and year out. The survival of these libraries is testimony to the magic of books, to the communal need for the culture, the rich mental stimulation, the broadening agency of the printed page. It is obvious from the facts presented, however, that community libraries will not make progress sufficient to fill up the great vacuum in library service in rural America. Other means must be sought, perhaps state aid and certainly county library systems.

The county library. The county library is tax-supported, maintains a headquarters, branches in towns and villages, and stations to which small book collections are sent periodically, perhaps to rural schools and stores or homes in more remote areas. Sometimes there is direct service by "bookmobile." The central library is open to everybody, it usually serves individuals by mail or telephone, and secures for serious students any needed book in the county or state libraries.

The first modern county libraries were established in Van Wert County, Ohio, and Washington County, Maryland, in 1898. From this start, the number grew to 99 counties in 1920, 176 in 1925, 228 in 1936 and 342 in 1939. This increase seems to have come as a result of state aid, interest aroused through W.P.A. rural book projects and long-time campaigns in individual counties. It is interesting to note that only about three fifths of these county libraries subsist as independent units.

The rest contract with urban libraries for rural service, a heartening illustration of rural-urban co-operation.

The trend toward districts or regions larger than a county is also more marked. Most of the states have now set up some sort of state plan for library development and practically all of these include emphasis on regions. Some actual results are seen in Vermont, Louisiana, and in connection with the T.V.A.

A trend toward regional branches of the state library agency, rather than regional libraries established by local action alone, also seems to be clear. Vermont at least belongs in this category. Apparently, the small local library and even the small governmental unit will co-operate with the state more readily than with adjoining governmental units.

The American Library Association has been active in promoting this movement and in improving rural library service in general. Their recommended minimum appropriation is \$1 per capita. An unpublished study by Miss Elsa Burner, made in 1934 under the direction of the Department of Adult Education of Teachers College, Columbia University, showed that under existing conditions and in view of the average population density, a service far better than what is possible on a haphazard community basis could be secured for perhaps 25 to 30 cents.

Many reports and records of county librarians read like romance. Books are sent to remote ranches and received by people who reach their rural mail boxes on snowshoes, horseback or in canoes. Even the statistics are meaningful. The second year after reorganization a Louisiana parish (county) library operating on a budget of \$16,000 in a community having a large percentage of Negroes circulated six books per capita among less than 30,000, a high average. This system put deposits into all Negro schools. California's 43 county libraries circulate over 11 million books a year.² There can be no question about the response of rural people to library service when it is offered.

² Cf. Fair, Ethel M., *County-Wide Library Service* (American Library Association, Chicago, 1934), for an interesting compilation of various methods and expediences by which libraries are serving rural people.

Advantages of the county library. The advantages of county libraries, which are now permitted by law in all but four states, excepting New England, lie chiefly in the fact that the unit of operation is large enough to obtain support for an adequate book stock and a trained librarian. It must be remembered, however, as Chapter XXXIV shows, that the county is not necessarily the best unit of operation for certain social services; steps have already been taken in various regions for the amalgamation of groups of counties as operating library units. This augurs well for the progress of rural reading facilities, and is another indication that county lines must eventually yield to social exigencies.

Interesting, too, are the beginnings in several states of additional library services such as the circulation of pictures, periodicals, music and phonograph records, and of co-operation among various rural adult education agencies. Typical of such innovations is the five-year reading project sponsored by the South Dakota Agricultural Extension Service and the South Dakota Library Commission. For the first year's study the state library worker prepared a general outline on "Reading in the Home," mimeographed and distributed by the Extension Service. For the second year a course on the novel was prepared (also printed and distributed by the Extension Service), and training schools were conducted in thirteen counties to introduce the project to leaders of farm women's clubs organized by the Extension Service. Books were supplied by state traveling libraries and by county and local branches.

State colleges help. The state colleges of agriculture are making other contributions to the problem of furnishing reading materials for rural people. Extension bulletins and circulars are issued to an annual average of 27 per state. In few states does the distribution fall below 100,000; in some it exceeds a million.

The average Texas farm and village home requests a pamphlet every three weeks. In New York, a request comes from every rural home about six times a month. It should be recalled that in more than two thirds of the states, publications are sent out only on

request, so that the recipient has spent at least one cent for a postal card and the time involved in writing.¹

A number of states conduct book hours over the radio and several promote the organization of libraries. Written requests as to what to read on specific subjects have grown so heavy that six states offer what librarians call readers' advisory service.

Next steps in library service. Despite these various enterprises the rural library situation falls far below the urban level. In the main it has been strengthened during the years 1930-39. Rural people are standing loyally by such libraries as they have, the county movement has again shown a gain, and the new plan for district or regional service, the latter already approved by a majority of the states, should under normal conditions result in a further forward step in the huge task of bringing library service to rural America closer to the plane it occupies in the city. The movement for state aid to libraries also holds hope in achieving this objective. Seven states voted appropriations for this purpose in 1937-38, but only three of these were on a permanent continuing basis. Sixteen states are considering action at legislative sessions in 1939. Library leaders are obviously following those in the field of the public school in urging state aid, and for the same reasons.

The President's Advisory Committee on Education has drawn attention to the deficiencies and has urged some federal aid to rural libraries in order to begin to remove the obvious inequalities. Coupled with the move for more state aid, this step, if it comes, will make for significant progress in rural library service in the decade ahead.

OTHER ACTIVITIES IN ADULT EDUCATION

Other rural adult education agencies. There are many other agencies of rural adult education, some of them of long stand-

¹ Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, I., *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, p. 215. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937. These comparisons include all circulation of state bulletins with no deduction for out-of-state and urban circulation, which is probably relatively small. The circulation of federal bulletins is not included.

ing, some comparatively new. The Grange has for more than fifty years in all its 8000 locals stressed its "lecture hour," which is often an open forum of considerable educational value. Materials are specially created for it and leaders trained. The Farm and Home Bureaus, closely associated in most states with the Agricultural Extension Service, have played a large rôle in rural adult education. The women's clubs and certain other agencies, described in Chapter XXII, have their educational features. The churches are beginning to be attracted to adult education. More than one fourth of the village and about one tenth of the open-country churches in 1930 arranged for lectures or lecture courses. About one tenth of the village churches, in addition to their Bible classes connected with the Sunday School, organized adult classes of one sort or another. Though these church figures were lower in 1935 the loss was probably a temporary depression influence.

Radio. Somewhat similar reactions to broadcasting were found in questionnaires and surveys conducted by such magazines as *The Woman's World* and by some of the farm press. Regardless of the musical preferences of rural people, however, there is no doubt that the radio has been an enormous cultural influence amongst them, an influence which has thus far largely escaped precise analysis by social scientists. It is clear that the radio has broadened rural lives, affected daily rural conversation, and possibly buying habits. It has pierced the isolation of rural life and made the voice of the nation's chief executive, informally discussing national problems, more familiar than that of the county sheriff. A radio was found in more than one fifth of the farm and about one half of the rural non-farm homes in 1930. In 1938 seven tenths of all rural families had radios. The regional proportions ranged from 96 per cent on the Pacific Coast to 51 per cent in the east-south-central census division. The other two Southern census divisions were just above the South Central States. All other regions were at or above the average. Rural people with radios listened slightly over five hours a day.¹ The Federal Govern-

¹ *The Joint Committee Study of Rural Radio Ownership and Use in the United States.* New York, 1939.

ment, in its Farm and Home Hour and in its more technical broadcasts, and the considerable number of the state universities and colleges of agriculture are bringing information, news, wholesome entertainment to rural people. Such national features as the Town Meeting of the Air are popular in rural America and numerous local discussion groups make this program the basis for their own meetings. This is not to say that rural people have different tastes from urban. Commercial surveys¹ show that a number of national hook-up features have great attractive power. Four fifths of all rural homes listen to Major Bowes and nine tenths to one of the best-known humorists. More than one fourth tune in regularly on the New York Philharmonic concerts. In this case there is a sharp difference by income groups. Of the top third in income, 35 per cent listen to this feature. Only half as many of the low third get it, but even this group represents half a million rural homes.

A most obvious and possibly most important contribution of the radio is the opportunity it affords the homemaker to gain some enjoyment or profit during the time spent in such routine household chores as dishwashing, mending, or dusting. In an extensive inquiry, one of the rural women's magazines found that over half the women reporting utilized the radio in this way.²

The moving picture. Like the radio, the moving picture is, apart from strictly educational films, both recreational and educational. Concerning the cultural value of the movies, conflict is always raging. It is accused of inciting crime and undermining morals. It is censored, and yet it is lauded as a great educational force. It has, on the whole, from a sociological standpoint, been too little studied.³

Movies in villages. Even in 1929-30 the local village movie was losing ground. Attendance had been declining slowly and steadily since 1920. Not even the change to sound

¹ Cf. *Columbia's R.F.D. Audience*. New York, Columbia Broadcasting System, 1939.

² Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, p. 200. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

³ The best attempt to date is the ambitious series of studies made at New York University, Department of Sociology.

pictures checked this movement in some of the places studied. All told, 112 of the 140 villages had moving picture houses, six less than in 1924. The difficulties of the local theaters were explained by radio and urban competition, but even in many neighboring cities of 10,000 to 50,000 rural attendance was reported to have fallen off, particularly since 1930.

The influence of the movies on dress, customs, morals, standards and speech of rural people is probably exaggerated. This influence needs to be studied, however, if proper techniques can be devised. At the same time, it must be remembered that country people have other means of learning about the world at large. Their cars take them to town and city very frequently, where they can observe life and people in urban surroundings. The Home Demonstration agents have taught rural women more about style and dress than Greta Garbo or Jean Harlow.

The newspaper. The newspaper is an important factor in rural adult education. It has a real function to fill in relaying important local news and in interpreting the local meaning of other events. A number of agricultural colleges and state universities are co-operating with rural editors in developing better papers, and the urban daily is finding its way more and more into farm and village homes. Associations of editors are also building up morale. It is probable that urban competition and the depression have forced the weaker, less useful sheets to the wall in these last years. Indeed, in city and country alike the number of newspapers has been declining for more than a decade. The quality of the surviving ones appears to be improved. This is not to say that many of them do not have the faults reported in a study of Connecticut weeklies made nearly a decade ago,¹ such as inadequate coverage of local, political, and socially significant news and either no editorials or meaningless ones. On the other hand, if the study alluded to were made today or its basis broadened to include papers in a larger number of

¹ Willey, M. M., *The Country Newspaper*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1926. This study was based on Connecticut weeklies.

rural areas, some papers would be found that were distinctive, and whose editorials contained vigorous and progressive comment on local, county and state issues and exerted real leadership. County and local news in such papers is often well reported, and in some of the weeklies of the villages studied even book reviews, contributed by the local librarian or a library committee, were found in most issues. No one knows the proportion of local newspapers so edited but those that are were not only socially significant; they were also firmly established.

In this connection the influence of the farm press is not to be ignored. Some of these papers have circulations running into hundreds of thousands and in not a few cases, even millions. The annual analysis of the editorial opinion of these papers published each September in the Information Service of the Federal Council of Churches shows that many of them are presenting important material dealing with the social and economic issues and events of rural America, as well as with national issues affecting the well being of agriculture.

THE FUTURE OF RURAL ADULT EDUCATION

The future of rural adult education is, in many respects, uncertain. The Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Services at least are likely to remain through any predictable future, and there are some indications that their programs are becoming wider and more socially significant. That these services have a potential function of paramount significance in the field of rural adult education is beyond doubt. How this potentiality can be realized has already been indicated in part. Whether it will be fulfilled depends on many factors and may involve a change in the basic law or a liberalization of administrative interpretations and regulations under the law.

That the schools are becoming increasingly interested in adult education is clear. In those places where the emergency W.P.A. program was reasonably successful, the expectation is that it will be taken over eventually by the community. If the

federal appropriations for adult education urged by the President's Advisory Committee on Education are voted, the schools' program will undoubtedly be both strengthened and broadened. Other agencies seem to be moving forward, though at different speeds, and there is as yet no indication that the demand of the rural public for such services is lessening, despite local failures. For the immediate future the upward curve of interest and participation in adult education in rural America seems likely to continue its course.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Describe the activities of the Agricultural Extension Service in your county and indicate what changes you would make in its program and why.
2. Draw up a practical plan for library service for your county or community.
3. List and describe the adult education activities, formal and informal, in your community. Do these activities meet all recognizable needs? What changes would you make in the adult education set up? Why?
4. Write either an affirmative or a negative brief on the question: Resolved, that adult education should be included in the public school program at public expense.
5. Should the Extension Service expand its program to include all rural people? Defend your opinion.

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CHAPTER XX

RELIGION AND THE RURAL CHURCH

IN TERMS of the number of units, of the total amount of current income and capital invested, of the number of people employed, population enlisted and attendance secured, the rural church outranks all other types of rural social organizations combined, with the single exception of the public school. In some communities the church is an even greater institution than the school.

This chapter considers the rural church as a social institution. It deals first, therefore, with the number of rural churches, their constituencies, organization, leadership, financing and denominational interrelationships; elements which, although common to all social institutions, are in the church, especially, influenced and even conditioned by the intellectual and religious climate and by the basic policies of national organization to which local units adhere.

HOW MANY RURAL CHURCHES ARE THERE?

In 1926 there were, according to the United States Census of Religious Bodies, approximately 175,000 rural churches, including those in villages and those in the open country. They were distributed over the nation more or less in proportion to the population, but not entirely so, for the lower the density of population, the smaller the number of churches for every 1000 persons. Conversely, the greater the population density, the larger the number of churches for every 1000 people. The problem of overchurching, characteristic of rural America, is mainly a problem peculiar to the older and more thickly settled areas of the East, South, and Middle West. In terms of regions, the range is from one church for every 317 persons in the South to one for every 1219 in the Rocky Mountain States. In terms

of a survey of 179 counties, the density factor for Protestants operates as follows:

Counties with a density of	1 to 10 persons per square mile have 1 church per 701 persons
	11 to 20 persons per square mile have 1 church per 460 persons
	21 to 30 persons per square mile have 1 church per 422 persons
	31 to 40 persons per square mile have 1 church per 414 persons
	over 40 persons per square mile have 1 church per 405 persons

Factors affecting church distribution. Neither population density nor economic prosperity is the final explanation for the great number of rural churches. Other factors are:

- (1) The number and strength of non-Protestant churches.
- (2) The degree of intensity of the rivalry among Protestant sects. The stronger this is the more churches there are.
- (3) The frequency and size of community units. The restriction of the community unit and the development of neighborhood life tend to multiply churches.
- (4) Where the density of population approaches the extreme in either direction, it operates more invariably to affect the number of churches. For example, a very sparse population has difficulty in assembling enough people to establish and maintain a church; the possibilities of duplication of churches are, therefore, reduced, and the areas which have no churches at all are more extended. On the other hand, the concentration of a large number of people within a small area makes division along the lines of denominational preference easier and reduces the areas which are unsupplied with churches.
- (5) In those sections where the church is more securely established and where it is most deeply rooted in the affections of the people, as in the South, and perhaps more especially in the Middle-Atlantic and Middle-Western areas, there tend to be more churches proportionately.
- (6) Racial groups, like the Southern Negroes, and large numbers of foreign-born farmers also tend to increase the number of churches.

General statements such as these give little or no true indication of the importance of the church in local communities. The average village-centered locality had, in 1930, 5.6 churches in the village itself, and 3.9 churches in the open-country hinterland, a total of 9.5 churches for every community, or half a church less than in 1924, a loss occurring exclusively in the open country.

This is not to say that there have been no changes in the distribution of village churches. Between 1924 and 1930 a new church was founded in two out of every five villages, but during the same period, as many died. Even in the open country, from which it is popularly supposed churches are slowly vanishing, one out of two communities saw a church born, while in each such community one church died. In other words, in the villages, the birth and death rate of churches exactly balanced at 6.6 per 100. In the open country the death rate of 22 per hundred almost doubled the birth rate of 11.6.

Much the same trend carried on through the depression years 1930-36. Among the villages there was a net loss of 2 per cent in the number of churches though the gross death rate was 9.2 per 100 churches. In the open country within this period almost 21 per cent of the churches died but the net decline was but 3.4 per cent, or at a considerably lower rate than in the period from 1920 or 1924 to 1930. It is possible social forces have eliminated the great majority of the weakest churches. Such a conclusion must await further study because many of the new churches were opened by unemployed ministers or former ministers who had lost their positions and were returning to the church as a haven, perhaps only temporarily. These ministers were prepared to preach for little more than subsistence and sought churches formerly abandoned.

In the 12 years in which the 140 village-centered communities have been subjected to review nearly 400 of the original 1400 churches have been closed, less than one tenth of them by any planned or co-operative arrangement. There are surely great social losses in this situation to say nothing of tragedy for some individuals. True this gross loss is relatively smaller than

among social organizations in the same communities but the churches presumably have the advantage of overhead leadership and in some cases of financial assistance. Moreover, most of the churches that have been born had little if any sociological or economic justification in terms of the population to be served or the resources available to support a program and pay for an adequate amount of ministerial service.

Birth and death rates have various explanations. What are the causes of this instability of rural churches which obviously entails certain hardships and losses to their constituencies?

Population shifts troublesome. The demise of a church is not difficult to understand. It is usually due to population change. More than two fifths of the gross loss in the number of churches occurred in localities which had lost population in preceding years, losses which were traceable, for example, to the departure of Negroes for the North, or of farmers to town or city.

High tenancy ratios serious. Farm tenancy played its part in the mobility of churches. Where it was decreasing, the church at least held its own; where it increased, the number of people reached by the church declined. Studies by the Institute of Social and Religious Research have repeatedly demonstrated that when the tenancy ratio exceeds one fifth, the church and other social organizations begin to decline. In counties where tenants operated half or more of the farms, the church enrolled two to four times more owners than tenants. The causes of this phenomenon were discussed in Chapter XIV.

Emotional sects unstable. Another large factor in the death of rural churches is the ephemeral character of some denominations, particularly the highly emotional sects so numerous in America. They rise and vanish with the arrival or departure of some extraordinary leader who claims divine eloquence. Such, for example, were the churches inspired by Aimee McPherson and her evangelical radio broadcasting. These bizarre sects seem to attract the economically oppressed, the highly emotional seeking release through religious media, in short, the psychologically unstable. For these reasons their organizations lack the stability and discipline of denominational

supervision, which is one of the important assets of the old and traditional sects. Mortality among new sects is high. Indeed, they were less important in 1930 than in 1924, although scattered reports indicate some gains in the 1930's.

Administrative errors. Again, churches die because their administrative arrangements can no longer keep them functioning, because they have become outmoded, like the one-room school. In early days, some of the larger denominations attempted to plant their churches in every village and in every open-country neighborhood. With modern high-speed transportation these isolated congregations are needless. Just as the automobile has, as shown in Chapter V, enlarged community boundaries, and as noted in Chapter XVII, made possible school consolidation, so it has accelerated the marked inclination of rural religious organizations to become centralized in village and town.

The villageward trend. In 1920, 22.6 per cent of the membership of village and 6.0 per cent of town churches came from the open country. In 1930 the respective figures were 39.3 and 23.9. The bulk of this increase occurred prior to 1925, but continued thereafter at a steady pace. By 1936, 40 per cent of the members of village churches came from the open country and similarly the proportion of open-country members in town churches again increased sharply, reaching 35.9 per cent. The reasons for this trend are many. It is largely a response to the growing tendency to group rural organizational activities in the village, as discussed in Part I. From the point of view of the people, it illustrates the desire to enjoy the better-trained ministers and richer programs of village and town churches, to worship in large congregations and thereby benefit from increased social opportunities, and to follow into the church the village people with whom they participate in other activities. Of course, it is usually the more prosperous families who transfer their memberships from the "little brown church in the vale" to village and town congregations. In this manner the open-country church is undermined and eventually dies, but the farther it is from village or town, the more healthy its roots, and the greater its chance of survival, as has been mathematically

demonstrated.² Moreover, village churches rarely, if ever, absorb all the constituents of abandoned country congregations, many of whom cease going to church altogether, especially if they do not own automobiles.

The villageward trend is likely to continue. More than once in the survey of the 140 villages, field workers were told of country congregations in which a majority of the members desired to amalgamate with a church of their own faith in the village, but refrained out of deference to a few older members. In the Middle-West field, workers were frequently told that the number of open-country members in village churches could easily be increased if the village pastors would cultivate the rural hinterland. The complaint was made that village ministers seemed quite unaware of the closing of open-country churches, though this was not always the case. Three village churches were found which brought country members in by buses; a service which had greatly increased their farm constituency.

RURAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

According to the United States Census of Religious Bodies of 1926, the average rural church had 98 members. This figure includes both village and open-country data. Separated, the average village membership in 1936 was 171, an increase of 23 over 1924, and the average country church had 93 parishioners, as against 80 in 1924. This small increase occurred in every region, although there were regional deviations, which were, to be sure, slight everywhere except in the Far West. The Negro churches in the South have declined slightly since 1924. Roman Catholic congregations had about twice as many parishioners as the national average, but declined in number. They comprise ten per cent of all open-country churches.

The elimination of the weakest churches, already described, partly accounted for the increase in average church memberships. Thus, in 1924, 44.8 per cent of all open-country churches had less than 50 members. In 1936 the proportion was 30.8 per cent. Such a diminution obviously tended to lift the average

² Cf. Morse and Brunner, *The Town and Country Church in the United States*. Harper & Bros., New York, 1923.

membership in churches. Again, between 1924 and 1930 half the village and nearly two fifths of the open-country churches registered a net membership gain.

Inactive members. These average figures, 171 in the village and 93 in the country, must be qualified, since one fifth of the members are classed as inactive. That is, they have ceased to contribute to or attend regularly the churches which still retain their names on the rolls. In the South, three tenths of all church members were inactive. In addition, one eighth of all members (one sixth in the South) are no longer resident in the community, although they retain their connection with and contribute to their churches. This phenomenon is one of the results of the rural-urban migration, but shows the power of sentiment in causing people to cling to home ties after they migrate to new places.

The hold of the rural church on its constituency. The adherence of members to their church can be measured by the proportion of the population enrolled in church and by the attendance of members and adherents at church services. The membership figures are shown in Table 61 and indicate that in recent years there has been a slight but perceptible loosening of church ties upon village and farm population, a tendency noted in all regions. There is some reason to think that Protestant churches have not been so well able to retain their members as some others.¹

TABLE 61. RATIO OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP TO COMMUNITY POPULATION
— 140 VILLAGES

Region	1924 Per cent	1930 Per cent	1936 Per cent
All regions.	35.3	32.9	32.8
Middle Atlantic.	37.9	35.9	34.0
South.	38.4	34.9	37.6
Middle West.	36.5	35.8	32.1
Far West.	24.6	21.0	25.5

Regional strength varies. This table also illustrates the well-known fact that the church is stronger in some areas than in others, although the chief variant is the Far West. Population mobility is, of course, a partial explanation of regional devia-

¹ Cf. Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 219.

tions. The ratio of adults in the church varies directly with the proportion of the population born in the state of their residence and inversely with the rate of population increase. Thus the seven states reporting the largest proportion of adult population affiliated with the church had increased their populations but 39.27 per cent between 1900 and 1920, and only 12.5 per cent of their inhabitants in 1920 were born in other states. The seven states with the smallest proportion of the population in the church had grown three times as fast and received proportionately four times as many people from other states. These tendencies are revealed graphically in Figure 43, which, however, is national, not rural, in scope.

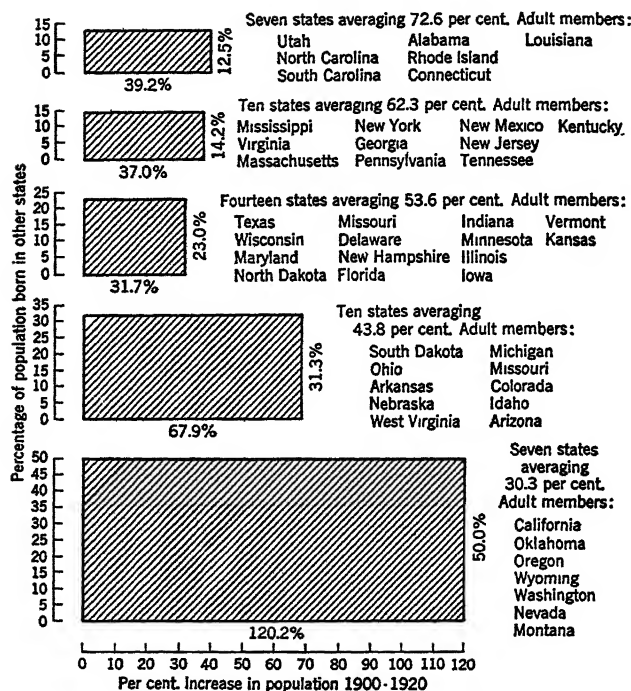
This analysis tends to take the mystery out of the fact that some states and regions of the nation are distinctly more religious than others. Their inequality proves to be partly a phenomenon of unequal population growth and stability. The church as an institution has not yet caught up with the more rapidly changing parts of the nation. It has never found a means of ministering adequately to those who lived in sparsely settled areas and who soon learned to exist without such ministry. Such persons, too, as their very migration showed, were of the restless brood of American pioneers upon whom tradition made but slight impression.¹

On the other hand, with the more stable populations of the eastern seaboard, loyalty to the church, like other social traditions, has long been ingrained. Church membership is a token of respectability, and for that reason its customs and mores are more binding upon the social group.²

Population changes in local communities. The principles here elucidated are true even for local communities, and a consideration of them adds to our knowledge of the influence of population change on church memberships. When the church records of villages which gained population more rapidly than the nation as a whole (16.1 per cent) were examined, it was found that the net membership increase was 4 per cent, or less than

¹ Cf. Hooker, *Hinterlands of the Church*. New York, Harper & Bros., 1930.

² Cf. Douglass and Brunner, *The Protestant Church as a Social Institution*. New York, Harper & Bros., 1935. See chapter ix, from which several sentences in the above paragraph are taken with minor changes.



(Courtesy of Harper and Brothers)
 FIG. 43. INFLUENCE OF MOBILITY OF POPULATION OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN THE STATES

one fourth the rate of population gain. The proportion of all people belonging to a church thus declined from 33 to 29 per cent of the population. On the other hand, in the villages which lost more than 10 per cent of the population between 1920 and 1930 (the average loss, where loss occurred, was 17.4 per cent) church membership declined only 6.2 per cent, while the number of non-residents simultaneously increased. This tendency for church membership to decline more slowly than population and to increase less rapidly than population may be considered a well-established phenomenon. It has been met in many studies in both city and country.¹

¹ See especially, Fry, *Diagnosing the Rural Church* (New York, Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1924); and Sanderson, *The Strategy of City Church Planning* (New York, Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1932).

Some might explain the lessening hold of the church on the ground that it was losing the confidence, and was failing to supply the needs of particular groups, but this is not borne out by an analysis of church rolls. There has been, for example, no disproportionate decline in the number of men or young people in the rural church. Whatever the cause, the fact remains that the decline in the ratio of church membership to community population has been accompanied by a falling off in attendance as well. In these 140 communities the population increased 23,500 between 1924 and 1930, but total monthly church attendance decreased 10,045. The average person went to church nine times in 1930 and eight in 1936 for every ten attendances in 1924.

Changing attitudes as explanations. Any further explanation for this data will have to be drawn from changes in the religious climate for which, obviously, no barometer has yet been devised. The great increase in informal recreation — the lure of the open road on the Sabbath to those possessing automobiles — might have affected rural church attendance. There has also been increasing criticism of the limitations of the rural clergy, who must now bear comparison with the nation's best preachers broadcasting their powerful sermons on the radio.

Radio competition. Broadcast sermons, with the prestige of a great speaker behind them, also bring doctrinal views which perhaps express or rationalize the experience of some rural people more adequately than the views of the local preacher. In other words, there are lacunae in provincial religious tradition, just as there are gaps in the whole rural cultural *milieu*, and they are perhaps more apparent today than they were a decade ago, and therefore more unsettling.

Weariness with competition. Again, some people have grown weary of competition among churches. Wherever proposed church co-operation has for any reason been prevented, local leaders have lapsed into inactivity. Finally, the very ease with which Sunday movies have been legalized in some Middle-Atlantic States villages, where five years before attempts to

legalize them would have met with strong protests by church people, indicates some changes of attitude or shifts in voting power. Whether this means a softening of the moral and religious fiber of rural people or a purposeful increase in tolerance and broadening conception of the rôle of religion in rural life many debate but none can as yet decide.

THE ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM OF THE RURAL CHURCH

We have seen that by virtue of the number of its units and an enormous constituency, the church is a very important part of the rural social structure, but that because of regional differences, fluctuations in population and changes in religious attitudes, it is enrolling a slightly smaller proportion of the population than formerly. Here then is a great social institution facing changes that seem to indicate need for adaptation to altering conditions. What has the rural church done in this exigency? To answer that question, it is necessary to turn first to its program and organization.

Supervision. Each church is part of a denominational body, and each of these bodies in its own way makes suggestions regarding specific activities and goals and provides supervision. But the supervisory unit can render only small assistance to the local congregation. Denominational concern is almost wholly with administrative matters. Supervision is far less adequate than for the public school. Some denominations, to be sure, have special rural church departments, but their number, because of financial difficulties, is smaller than formerly.

The keystone of the organization is obviously the local minister. The ideal situation and declared objective would be a full-time resident minister for every church. But since 1920, and particularly since 1924, there has been regress rather than progress in this matter. About seven tenths of the open-country churches have non-resident service, and the same is true of about one fifth of the village churches. Less than one tenth of

the open-country and only a few more than two fifths of the village churches have full-time resident clergy. The rest have pastors who give part-time attention to churches elsewhere. The obvious reason for this situation is the large number of churches and the resulting small memberships, which are unable, at the present or at any predictable salary level, to support a full-time minister.

Preaching. The largest part of the church program is preaching. Every effort is made to have at least one service a Sunday, an ideal realized by seven eighths of the village and nearly two fifths of the country churches, which is a gain over past performance attributable in part to the automobile, and attained in the face of decreasing attendance and at the expense of other possible features of the program.

Religious education. Ninety-two per cent of the village and 86 per cent of the open-country churches maintain Sunday Schools enrolling an average of 125 and 75 students respectively, and securing about two thirds of the enrollment on any given Sunday. These schools, which are now enlisting adults, a fact which accounts for their slow but steady growth in enrollment from 1920 to 1930, teach the Bible and Christian doctrine. About one eighth of those enrolled are teachers or officers, so that this program, more than any other activity, involves the continuous service of the laity. The educational procedure is quite simple. The handicaps of small buildings, of churches which in a majority of cases have no classrooms, and of teachers largely untrained, are not conducive to good pedagogy, even of the traditional type. There has been some improvement in village Sunday School facilities, as will be noted; but for some years back only one eighth even of the village churches conduct teacher-training classes. Interestingly, though churches have gained in members the proportion without Sunday Schools, the best feeder the church has, remained constant.

The best advance in educational procedures has been in the development of daily Vacation Bible Schools, now conducted for from two to six weeks by one fourth of the rural congregations. In these, for at least three hours daily, some worth-while edu-

cational practice is being developed. To counterbalance this progress, however, the amount of week-day religious instruction on a public school level, often for credit, was halved between 1924 and 1930. Moreover, in the main, church schools still cling to the traditional educational program. Good gains were also made between 1930 and 1936 in the proportion of churches having classes to prepare for church membership.

Other organizations. About 70 per cent of all rural churches possess an average of two and a half subsidiary organizations each, comprising chiefly women's and young people's groups, but also some men's organizations. Boys' and girls' organizations are declining with the rapid spread of 4-H clubs. During the 1920's about three tenths of the village and one tenth of the open country churches broadened their programs to include such things as lectures, concerts, and dramatics. There was some evidence in 1936 that such activities had suffered during the depression years. Whether because of budget difficulties or because of the competition of more interesting activities by various social organizations or by emergency federal agencies such as the W.P.A. recreational program, it is not easy to determine. But a very few churches were carrying on well-organized relief and welfare programs. In one village,² a socially-minded pastor, concerned over the obvious revolt of youth against moral conventions and mores, initiated a program of activities and discussion for the young people of the community. To compete with roadhouses, weekly dances were included. The response of the youth was almost unanimous. Immediately, quite unanimous opposition arose from the other churches. Proselyting was charged. The program was, therefore, discontinued; and the youth problem rapidly assumed more serious proportions. In another village, a young people's program in a well-equipped community building was offered to the W.P.A. recreation officials; but the building was closed and the program discontinued when it was discovered that

² From here to the end of the paragraph and the following four paragraphs are quoted from Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 314-16. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

W.P.A. leadership meant that persons of any church could be admitted.

One Negro church is conducting a full program of recreation, including athletics and education on Sunday afternoons, which has proved very popular. Despite criticisms from the ministers of other churches of both races, this program is locally credited with measurably improving conditions among Negro youth.

Clashing philosophies also are apparent in the attitudes of clergy and laity. Contrasting with the forums and classes noted above is the church in which the men's organization insisted on discussing the religious implications of modern social and economic problems, but was opposed by the pastor on the ground that such activities were not "spiritual." The contrasting incident is that of a young, social-minded pastor who lost his church after a discussion of the Soil Conservation program of the Department of Agriculture under the title "Our Stewardship of God's Land." The leading laymen of this church explained the action thus: "When we really need rain, God will send it. And, brother, we won't attend a church where a minister uses notes; for the Lord has said he would fill their mouths."

There was great concern among the clergy over the return of legalized liquor, and much denunciation of youth and women for drinking; yet, in the main, with the exceptions noted in the discussion of the youth problem in Chapter XII, the testimony of the schoolmen, physicians, and other leaders among the laity was to the effect that moral conditions were better than in the latter half of the 1920's and were improving. This was true even where the churches were clearly declining in influence. In fact, some of the worst situations apparently existed in the half-dozen and more villages where the churches had been strong enough to prevent chaperoned dances or other activities deemed too liberal in the local community, thereby forcing those interested in such activities into seeking them under commercial auspices.

It is quite clear that the issues involved in an individualistic, as against a social, interpretation of religion are by no means

settled; and that in fact there is also an issue between the generations as to church policy. Rural youth is not interested in an interpretation of religion solely in terms of doctrine or ritual. This was found even in a number of Roman Catholic churches. It is not interested in denominational divisions. It is resentful in the extreme when such divisions balk "going" programs. Three times as many pastors reported that youth were losing interest in the church and its program as felt that the interest of youth was quickening. Where the latter report was made to field workers, the churches concerned were catering to youth in terms of youth's needs. These issues appeared more serious than at any time since this series of studies began.

Leadership. Since it is clear that the church has not yet made any considerable adaptation to its emerging problems, the question arises, how competent is its professional leadership to meet the new situations as they arise? The handicap under which that leadership works through the necessity of dividing individual attention among a number of churches, has already been pointed out. Even resident pastors serve on the average nearly two churches, and non-residents serve three. Their training, however, may have a bearing on the problem.

Little professional training. The data indicate a rather low level of professional training among the Protestant rural clergy, who constitute the great majority of rural ministers. The standard accepted training includes a college education and graduation from a theological seminary. According to the federal religious census of 1926, more than half the Protestant rural clergy, excluding the Negro denominations, lacked both of these desiderata. Twenty-two and six tenths per cent had both, the rest, about 25 per cent, either one or the other. The majority of the better-trained rural clergy are, of course, in the villages. More than two thirds of the village ministers possessed either a college or seminary degree or both. The better-trained were also more likely to be resident rather than non-resident pastors, so that the task of serving the difficult and backward open-country parishes was entrusted to the poorly

trained. On the other hand, well over nine tenths of the Roman Catholic clergy have had both college and seminary training.

Conditions of work. A partial explanation of this situation may possibly be found in the conditions under which rural clergy work. The average length of tenure is less than three years, a short time in which to gain the spiritual confidence and respect of a community. The compensation, too, is not large, averaging, in 1936, slightly over \$1200 a year for Protestant resident village ministers and \$858 for all non-residents. Most of the former and many of the latter also enjoyed the free use of a house. The Roman Catholic priests averaged \$1200 and a rectory, Negro pastors \$480. These salaries represent a 26 per cent decline since 1930, but they compare favorably with those of school teachers, who are somewhat better trained, but a far larger proportion of whom are unmarried. Viewed in terms of support for a family, ministerial salaries appear inadequate and have forced nearly one fourth of the Protestant clergy to supplement their income by working part-time at another occupation. This further weakens their efficiency as ecclesiastical leaders.

The minister, of course, does not expect to make money. His is a profession which requires sacrifice. According to tradition, his chief concern is with the things of the spirit and he is more or less oblivious in his personal attitude and work to external conditions. A minister must, nevertheless, contrive to keep out of debt. The profession requires therefore a certain strong psychological equipment. The local church recognizes this and seeks a leader who has a very "human personality." The material emphasis crowds in upon the spiritual and the minister is torn between material security and spiritual forces.

Enough has been said to show that the rural clergy are not in a very happy situation. Frequent changes of location and the fact that one fourth of a professional group is attempting to earn outside funds do not bespeak a high morale. Is it affecting the future? Douglass shows that "on the side of formal education, the trend of a minority is regrettably down-

ward.”¹ The 1930 census returns for the agricultural villages indicated that nearly three fifths of the village clergy are over 45 years of age, one tenth over 65. Ministers are on the average younger than village doctors, but as is the case with the doctors, rural communities are not attracting enough recruits to the ministry to maintain indefinitely the present religious set-up.

CHURCH FINANCES

The plight of the clergy raises the question of support for the rural church. Each of the 140 village centered communities spent \$16,000 annually for its churches on the average in 1930 and \$10,300 in 1936. The average budget fell from \$2400 to \$1910 in the village Protestant churches and from \$709 to \$560 in the open country between these years, declines of more than 20 per cent. The Roman Catholic churches spent about \$800 and \$400 more, respectively, than the Protestant. The lower rate of decline in the total budgets as compared with the per capita contributions is due to the larger memberships already noted.

The average rural church is obviously not a strong financial institution. Without church consolidation it cannot be and ministers, especially in the open country, must serve more than one church to live. However, the proportion of the average dollar going to the ministers is steadily increasing as Table 62, which covers over 2500 churches, shows.

TABLE 62. DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES IN VILLAGES AND COUNTRY PROTESTANT CHURCHES

Expenditure	21 Counties		140 Village Communities					
	Village Churches	Country Churches	Village Churches			Country Churches		
	1920	1920	1924	1930	1936	1924	1930	1936
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Salary	39.4	47.0	43.6	49.4	49.9	48.3	51.4	56.2
Benevolences	29.1	29.3	31.8	21.6	17.1	32.0	24.9	20.0
Other	31.5	23.7	24.6	29.0	33.0	19.7	23.7	23.8

¹ *Op. cit.*

Benevolences declining. The decline of the proportion of the total budget going to benevolences is paralleled by a decline in the per capita contributions to this cause. Each individual's gift to his pastor's salary and the upkeep of his church increased in terms of averages; but in the churches of the 140 villages the average per member contributions for missions dropped from \$5.64 to \$3.54, and in the country from \$3.28 to \$2.15. This trend obtained in all regions. The total per capita contributions, it should be added, were \$16.38 per year in villages in 1930 and \$8.57 in open-country churches, figures which varied but slightly from 1924, although they were about 10 and 20 per cent respectively below 1920. This decline is obviously much less than the decrease in farm income. Giving specific amounts to the church is perhaps determined in part by habit. In part it is also an evidence of the transcendent interest which inevitably, if immeasurably, protrudes itself into the background of every study of institutionalized religion. In other words, when the heap of economic statistics is sifted, when ratios are worked out and conclusions reached, there is always the great human factor, oblivious to trends, to economic decline or progress. Man cares for his soul as well as his body, and his beneficence to the church is constant, because he feels that apart from the hard reality of earning a livelihood and supporting a family there is the imponderable reality of religion, demanding his financial as well as his spiritual support. As Douglass says:

The most revealing factor in human economics is the spending of material resources upon ideals and passions rather than upon necessities. It is as the fulfillment of a dream rather than the maintenance of a particularly efficient instrument that the believing masses, from generation to generation, continue to pour out their substance upon the church. Consequently, the masses are not greatly impressed either by the magnitude of the social institution or by the vast sums which the church costs. Compared to the glory of God which the church reflects, these things are the small dust of the balance.¹

¹ *Op. cit.*, chapter xiv.

Influence of economic conditions on church. This is not to say that economic conditions do not influence contributions to the church. Studies by the Institute of Social and Religious Research have repeatedly demonstrated that there is a relation between economic adversity or prosperity and church support. From the mass of available data the following is selected as the simplest and most recent on this point.

Where the per capita retail sales in the village community, as determined by the 1930 United States Census of Distribution, amounted to less than \$200 a year, the average per member contributions to the churches were only \$9.84. The remaining figures follow in tabular form:

Sales	Contributions
\$200 to \$300	\$13.05
\$300 to \$400	14.48
\$400 to \$500	18.38
Over \$500.	16.92

The decline when sales passed \$500 per persons checks with many other similar results obtained by using different measuring rods. It is probably an index of the highly stereotyped program of the rural church, an institution which does not know how to exist without at least the part-time service of a minister and a place to meet. When, however, it has achieved a dignified and well-equipped edifice, a full-time minister with perhaps an assistant, and a better than average program, measured in terms of what churches are known usually to do, it has no items that call for money, save benevolence. Churches are larger in wealthier communities. The per capita cost of the highly standardized program consequently declines. It is in such areas that the surplus available for benevolences goes into county-wide social and socio-religious agencies with paid executives. Unless they are subsidized from the outside, it is only in such wealthier areas that such agencies are found.”¹

Change of attitude can also greatly influence the allocation

¹ Douglass and Brunner, *op. cit.* Consult also Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, Appendix G; Brunner, Hughes, and Patten, *American Agricultural Villages*, chap. x; Fry, *Diagnosing the Rural Church*.

of church funds, as witness the actual and relative decline in missionary contributions already pointed out. Among the causes of such reallocations are: the necessity of paying the minister to keep the church going at all; increased interest charges and capital payments on new edifices; and a loss of conviction about or confidence in the value and efficiency of certain types of missionary enterprise, on which point there is considerable testimony.

Church buildings. Part of the problem of church finance in rural America and especially in the villages is complicated by the large capital investment of recent years. In the 140 village communities practically \$2,500,000 was added to this investment between 1924 and 1930, bringing the total value of church plants to over \$15,000,000 or about \$110,000 per community, although the average village and open-country church was valued at \$16,000 and \$4000 respectively.

Church buildings are to some degree representative of the ideas of their builders about the function of the church. The majority of country edifices are of one or two rooms, and the main objective is to secure an auditorium for preaching, the primary activity of the church. If resources are limited, perhaps only an auditorium can be provided, other activities being dispensed with or conducted under difficulty. How fundamental is the idea of the church as primarily a tabernacle for preaching, is shown in the disproportionate space — judged by modern standards — allotted to the auditorium in the older and larger churches. The second most important part of the church is "the basement" for kitchen use and for the use of the primary department of the church school; in larger edifices, separate rooms for the church school are provided. In a few of the more spacious recent buildings, rooms are equipped for community-house activities of a more or less elaborate kind, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

This analysis has shown that the rural church, especially in the open country, and in the village as well, is a small, poorly financed organization, existing under the leadership of a minis-

ter who perhaps fails to rise to a desired standard of professional training, and who, more often than not, must divide his services among several congregations. Its program is usually highly stereotyped, and there is some evidence that its hold upon its constituency is slowly diminishing. It is too small to afford better service, and it is difficult to improve the situation without better leadership. Its smallness arises in part from a multiplicity of units, a situation arising out of an administrative policy created before the advent of modern transportation facilities, and out of historic doctrinal differences which have perpetuated themselves in about two score major and more than 150 minor denominations. These are the things, which, sociologically speaking, hold the ministry and the churches on the horns of a very difficult dilemma.

The operation of traditional, sentimental loyalty to a particular church counteracts somewhat the changing material and physical conditions tending to bring about the abandonment of churches, particularly in the open country. The church is by nature conservative, the great repository of tradition, slow to change or recognize what is called modernity, so that individual churches are less ready to adapt themselves to change or die more slowly than other social institutions. But fundamentally the church is closely intertwined with the community; it is therefore important to analyze the relations of rural churches with their communities and with one another.

EFFECT OF COMPETITION

It has already been shown that competition among rural churches is inevitable under present conditions. If every man, woman and child in rural America were connected with some church, the average community would recruit only about 300 persons per church or about three churches for 1000 population. The national rural church executives of the various Protestant denominational boards have declared one church for each thousand persons of like nationality or tradition to be the desirable norm or ideal toward which to strive. The

implication of this is a confession that these same denominations are parties to competitive overchurching.

Measuring effects of competition. Some evidence bearing on the proposed norm is obtainable by various indices of church progress for 1924 and 1930 in the 140 village communities. The data, given in Table 63 show that during the earlier period, while churches which enjoyed comparative freedom from competition in terms of fewer units per 1000 people were larger, better-manned, better-attended, and richer, it was found that these churches enlisted a smaller proportion of the population in church membership, if no correction was made for inactive members.

TABLE 63. SPECIFIED DATA ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF CHURCHES PER 1000 POPULATION — 140 VILLAGES

	Number of Churches per 1000 Population							
	Under 2		2 to 3		3 to 4		4 and over	
	1924	1930	1924	1930	1924	1930	1924	1930
Number of communities....	21	28	49	48	40	32	28	32
Number of churches.....	122	172	475	457	473	329	366	378
Average membership....	172	192	146	139	103	111	82	91
Per cent with resident minister.....	55.7	76.8	46.3	58.5	38.7	54.8	30.1	40.2
Per cent of churches gaining last year.....	65.3	64.3	58.7	65.6	52.0	62.8	50.0	55.7
Average attendance principal service.....	151	107	121	91	108	83	125	69
Average Sunday-School enrollment.....	114	120	104	106	89	96	83	86
Average expenditure.....	\$2.193	\$2.937	\$2.097	\$1.899	\$1.544	\$1.648	\$935	\$1.081
Per capita expenditure....	\$13.02	\$16.00	\$14.12	\$13.57	\$14.44	\$14.60	\$11.23	\$11.71
Average benevolence....	\$5.65	\$5.71	\$6.59	\$4.30	\$4.61	\$3.48	\$3.19	\$2.26
Per cent of churches with home mission aid.....	13.9	10.4	7.2	15.0	10.0	17.3	12.1	16.9
Per cent of population in church membership....	27.4	26.3	36.0	31.3	34.8	35.4	43.4	44.0
Number of resident ministers per 1000 inhabitants..	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.7	1.6	1.8
Per cent of population enrolled in Sunday school...	15.8	16.0	22.3	22.1	25.2	27.6	37.4	36.4
Local expenditures of church per inhabitant.....	\$2.50	\$3.62	\$3.39	\$4.12	\$3.37	\$5.14	\$3.20	\$5.00
Home mission aid per inhabitant....	\$0.12	\$0.06	\$0.05	\$0.08	\$0.10	\$0.16	\$0.12	\$0.14

In the main these statements still hold; but careful examination of the table shows, among other things, that the proportion of communities with fewer than two churches for each 1000 inhabitants has increased by one fourth; that churches in these communities showed a greater gain in average membership, in total budget, in per capita contributions to all causes

and to benevolent enterprises, than in communities in which the number of churches was greater. In fact, in some particulars the churches in this group were the only ones to show gains, while those in the more competitive regions registered losses. These gains were scored despite the fact that denominational policy increased the number of resident ministers in competitive situations.¹

One interesting thing in this connection is that the slow-working social forces already discussed, which account for the death of rural churches, resulted between 1924 and 1930 in a decline of one half church per 1000 persons, a decline occurring in all regions, although at slightly varying rates.

The place of home mission aid. The situation is somewhat complicated by the historic practice of most denominations of extending aid to local units unable to support themselves. Originally this practice developed in the effort to assist the small but growing denominational groups along the Western frontier to remain within the sect of their first allegiance. It is also used to bring a minister to small communities with limited resources. But as the country developed and stabilized, millions of dollars were given annually by the denominations to churches which appeared to be in competitive situations. Moreover, the grants-in-aid were larger in competitive situations than elsewhere. Thus in the 140 village-centered communities where two or more churches were aided, the average grant in 1930 was \$421 per church. Where only one church was aided the amount was \$271.² Furthermore, there was a higher proportion, 18.6 per cent, of aided churches in small villages (which have been shown to have the most churches per 1000 population) than in the medium or large

¹ If the sample of communities were large enough to warrant analysis on a regional basis, the results would show even greater relative progress in the less competitive situations. A somewhat larger proportion of non-competitive communities are found in the Far West than elsewhere; but the Far West, as a region, makes a poorer record than other regions in a number of measurements of church efficiency. This weights the results in favor of the more competitive centers where regional factors make for better support of organized religion.

² In 1936 the average grants for all aided churches were respectively \$289 in the village and \$126 in the country.

villages where 15.0 per cent and 13.6 per cent, respectively, were receiving aid.

National administrations less competitive than state. It was also noticeable that the great increase in grants occurred in those states in which the national board executives have practically nothing to say about the policy of the state unit, since the state raises all the money it needs within its borders and contributes to the national costs as well. On the other hand, the number of grants made directly by national boards in non-self-supporting states declined, and had measurably shifted from competitive to non-competitive projects, such as larger parishes and allocated fields.

The unavoidable conclusion is that many of these minor units of Protestant denominations are co-operating more and more, not to gain any particular advantage, but because they are generous with their resources in competitive situations as long as their particular congregation is considered to have a chance to survive.

Effect of the depression. Liberals in all Protestant bodies have been attacking competition for a decade and more, and the Home Missions Council, the organization of the large majority of national Protestant home mission boards, has for the last five years or more called conferences and conducted surveys in many states for the purpose of reducing both "over-churching" and "underchurching." This movement has been greatly stimulated by a drop in the amount of contributions since 1930, which has resulted in reductions of from 25 to 90 per cent in the total amount of aid given by the various boards. In 1934 five of the large denominations prepared master lists of all aided churches for comparison, and as this work goes to press, there seems to be a real possibility that the national denominations home mission boards will measurably reduce competitive projects. The same procedure is to be urged on state and district units.

Social effects of competition. Table 63, above, reveals some of the effects of competition from the point of view of the church itself. From the social standpoint, strong competition

is much more serious, interfering mainly with community solidarity and intensifying group divisions. Competition keeps churches small and weak, thus preventing the acquisition of competent and well-trained ministers, and weakening the social and ethical aspects of religion in the community.

It must be remembered, however, that church competition is not exclusively a matter of doctrinal differences. In many places the real differentiating factors are economic and social. For example, tenants may gravitate to one church, owners to another, the elite of the community to a third, the small business and skilled labor class to a fourth, the very poor to a fifth. In areas where the economic make-up consists of farming, industry and other non-agricultural pursuits, factory people and farmers seldom join the same churches.

Influence of race on churching the community. In localities dominated by diverse nationality backgrounds, race heritage determines church affiliation. The Hollander attends the Dutch Reformed Church, the Rhine German the German Reformed, the Saxon is Lutheran, the North German may be Lutheran or he may join the Evangelical Synod of North America, which was a transplantation of Frederick William the Third's German State Church. In such cases language and customs vary, and denominational connections are the product of ethnic and social variations. The progenitors of such a group, for example, may have come to America partly because they opposed the union of Lutheran and Reformed bodies in Europe. Transition from one denomination to another, especially where denominations represent different nationality groups, is not easily effected.²

It is significant to summarize the most important conclusion of the preceding section: in spite of its ideals, the church has had to submit to social and economic factors more often than it has conquered them. The public school has been freer from such bondage, although neither church nor school has by any means achieved social autonomy.

² Cf. Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children*. New York, Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1929. Especially chapter vi.

RELIGIOUS CO-OPERATION IN RURAL AMERICA

Real progress has been made, however, in minimizing denominational differences, and actual co-operation has been achieved in some cases. National and (to a considerable extent) state home missions councils have erected the machinery for co-operative handling of competitive situations. The work of the five mission boards already alluded to may prove significant. Localities all over the nation have taken matters into their own hands and worked out adjustments which can be classified under several heads.

The non-denominational church. Such churches are cut off from denominational supervision and leadership and have an uncertain source of ministerial supply. Nevertheless, this severance of sectarian ties has, despite the difficulties it entails, been carried out by more than one hundred existing rural churches.

Affiliated churches. A variation of the non-denominational church is the affiliated type which remains substantially independent but maintains a loose connection with some denomination to insure a source of ministerial supply and now and then some supervision and suggestion. In 1925 there were about sixty or seventy such churches.

Federated churches. Federated churches are local combinations of congregations of two or more denominations into a single functional organization without severance of the previous denominational ties of combining units. There are perhaps about four hundred in rural America. Only 10 per cent of the federations, however, concern more than two denominations. Rural federated churches are about one half larger than the average denominational churches of the bodies generally participating in them, while urban federated churches surpass the average city church in size. Churches federate, in the main, only under great pressure of adverse circumstances.

Such churches operate as a unit in all local matters but retain their denominational ties. Benevolences are equitably divided. Frequently the ministers alternate between the bodies represented in the federation. A frequent and highly

unsatisfactory aspect of the federated church is the unfederated subsidiary. Minor organizations, such as denominational women's societies, insist on perpetuating themselves, usually because of social cleavages in the community. Within a supposedly united group, this does not make for great success.

Long-continued successful federation, however, frequently, though not universally, weakens desire to maintain separate denominations. A solution for such a condition is sometimes found in a bi-denominational relationship. The church becomes legally one, but is recognized by both denominations to which its members previously belonged. This has proved an acceptable solution in the case of the more liberal bodies.

Denominational community churches. These, the most numerous of united churches, have been elsewhere defined and described as follows in a work in which one of the authors collaborated:

A denominational community church is one formally recognized as such by other denominations. A group of co-operating denominations agree to accord an exclusive field to the church of one of their members, usually upon condition that it broadens the terms of membership and maintains a definite community outlook, with or without an equivalent exchange of fields. This method remedies past division and prevents future competition.

The act by which a denominational church merely widens the terms of its membership so as to admit members of all denominations without condition, such as assent to a particular creed or rebaptism, is not accepted by the writers as a true criterion of the type. This has always been the theory of the more liberal churches of the congregational type, and has been the actual practice of multitudes of others, as proved by the interchangeable use of denominational churches by large populations.

Denominational churches which have community aspirations and ideals but which have no authorization to represent a co-operating group of denominations, and have done nothing to change their ecclesiastical status, fall entirely outside of the definition of local church unions adopted by this study. They do not affect any ecclesiastical remedy for the religious division of communities, and their efforts are often so unconvincing as not to be demonstrable to anyone outside their own numbers.

One needs to recognize the realities behind even so attenuated a

version of the community church. It testifies to the softening of denominational asperities and to an atmosphere favorable to integration. Such churches should be kept distinct from those spurious cases where the label "community church" has been adopted for promotional purposes only.

With respect to all the types of churches enumerated above, a realistic viewpoint is far more important than a discussion of changes of formal ecclesiastical status. In the main only partial local union of two or at most three denominations is accomplished. Moreover, even after remedial adjustments have been made and a broader outlook and constituency secured, these churches sometimes fail to make a really positive demonstration of unity in community religion.

A very real challenge is expressed by an experienced witness, who writes: "A community church is not really an inclusive church.... Its invitation is inclusive, but the very prejudice and traditions of the people, ranging from true conservatives to modern liberals, so work as to make the membership of a community church a selective one." The ideal of really making a single church the religious organ of a community is, to say the least, an exciting one.²

There is now a national organization of workers in all types of united churches promoting an extension of the movement. It is known as the Community Church Workers and has recognized affiliations with the national co-operative church bodies. Nevertheless many denominational officials still oppose local community mergers. They point to the numerous failures of such amalgams, but surely denominational churches also fail and die in large numbers. It is significant, too, that the movement is very largely rural; more than four fifths of the churches on the lists of the Community Church Workers are rural, and of Miss Hooker's "United Churches," all of which were rural, more than two thirds were in the open country and in places of less than 1000.

The future of co-operation. Will the movement continue? It is difficult to answer this question despite the fact that the trend is more approved, better entrenched than ever. Four

² Douglass and Brunner, *The Protestant Church as a Social Institution*, chap. XII. Harper & Bros., New York, 1935. For a full discussion of these types of federated churches see Hooker, *United Churches* (Harper & Bros., 1927), a study of nearly 1000 cases undertaken in 1924 and 1925 by the Institute of Social and Religious Research.

fifths of some 4200 Methodist laymen and ministers replied affirmatively to the question, "Should rural churches be federated on community lines?"

On the other hand, since 1930 unemployed clergymen in many places have opened closed churches, especially if a parsonage was available, and have been conducting services and reorganizing the congregation in the hope of eking out some sort of a living. This has often increased competition.

The enduring trend seems to point, however, to greater co-operation among a majority of the Protestant bodies, evidence for which lies not merely in the co-operative arrangements already described, but also in modifications of the spiritual environment. An example of this is given above in the Methodist questionnaire; another illustration is the freedom with which individuals pass back and forth between denominations, showing that their religious needs can be satisfied in more than one sect. Ministers, too, change faiths. Almost half of those ordained in the Congregational Church, and about 40 per cent of those ordained in the Presbyterian Church, in 1929, came from other denominations.¹ Moreover, religious prejudice has declined markedly and now rests at a low level in respect to most American denominations.²

This highly condensed review of the rural church as a social institution reveals, then, that the church is the most conservative of all rural organizations with the exception of local government, discussed later. Five trends, however, rise into prominence regarding the church:

(1) There is an increasing proportion of village church-memberships resident in the country. On the other hand, there are a smaller number of country churches and country memberships.

(2) Rural churches, considering village and country together, are somewhat fewer in number, though larger in membership; yet a smaller proportion of the population is represented in the membership.

¹ Cf. Douglass and Brunner, *op. cit.*, chap. xii.

² *Ibid.*

(3) The leadership and programs of work, while different in detail, give little evidence of changing attitudes.

(4) Buildings are improving, while budgets arranged on a per capita membership basis have become practically stationary, at least up to 1931; the uses to which contributions are put, however, show a significant change.

(5) Adjustments involving more co-operation are apparent; yet evidence of competition exists.

The preceding discussion has shown, too, that the church reflects economic and social determinants. Yet, in spite of its religious values, it is a type of institution which functions according to its own institutional nature, subject, of course, to the limitations of its environment. But while this makes it possible to plan for the church effectively in social terms, deep-seated convictions, theological and historical differences, and a sense of the transcendental and eternal as apart from the mundane and temporal limit the effectiveness of action along such lines. The church has to function as a religious as well as a social body, a condition which may explain some of its dilemmas and seeming contradictions.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Discuss critically Sorokin and Zimmerman's comparison of rural and urban religions.
2. Outline a standard or a method by which you would be willing to advise, if asked, as to whether a particular town-country community had too many or too few churches.
3. What types of "united churches" did Miss Hooker find have increased most since 1910? Discuss some reasons.
4. Describe the rural service plan and program of some local church, country or village, with which you are acquainted.
5. Describe the rural service plan and policy of some national church body with which you are acquainted.
6. Analyze the program of some rural church you know. How would you change it? Why?

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CHAPTER XXI

RURAL MERCHANDISING AND INDUSTRY

IT HAS been shown earlier that the great majority of American villages, or places of less than 2500 population, are in the main service centers for agricultural areas, existing largely to serve the needs of farmers. If, then, chain stores, mail-order houses and city department stores succeed, as is often maintained, in eliminating much retail trading, village economic life, trade arrangements and community structure and social organization are profoundly altered. On the other hand, there are advocates of the decentralization of industry who would move most of our factories nearer to the sources of raw materials, that is, the villages; in this way, they argue, surplus farm labor would be absorbed, farmers could be employed in slack season, labor costs and taxation reduced, and with the development of superpower, it would be cheaper to transport electric current than raw material. Some persons have gone so far as to assert that such a program will save the American village. Decentralization would, at least, introduce a whole series of new problems and relationships. Population would increase, school and church enrollments gain, and social organizations grow and multiply. For this reason, the discussion now turns to an examination of rural retail trade and rural industrial life.

This subject is also important because merchandising, as conducted by these institutions called stores, is not merely an economic activity. It is social as well. It brings farm and village people into contact. It offers opportunity to exchange news and opinions. It is conducted on a personal basis to a far greater extent in rural than in urban America. It affords employment for local people who in turn support local churches and social organizations. It is the medium by which the pressing desires and needs of people for goods is met. This social function of merchandising has been too much neglected in the past.

RURAL MERCHANDISING AND INDUSTRY

This social function of merchandising is likely to receive increasing emphasis with the growing interest in consumer education and protection. As the efforts along these lines of the schools, the home economics extension service, the women's clubs, the consumer co-operatives, and other agencies become more general, the retailers will begin to feel pressure from their clients. It is possible that, because of the smaller numbers of people involved and the degree of personal relationship existing between buyer and seller in the rural community, the rural demand for improvement along lines advocated by consumer agencies will be an important factor in changing the national situation.

Number of stores in agricultural villages increasing. Any impartial examination of retail trade throws grave doubt on the conception that the small town "can't come back." In the main the data show that it has never gone away. It has already been pointed out that village population has been gaining rather than declining; that the proportion of villagers employed in trade has increased. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that the number of village stores and other commercial enterprises has steadily increased between 1910 and 1930. In 1910 there were an average of 44.9 commercial establishments in each American village, in 1920, 49.3, and in 1930, 56.2. This trend is true for villages in all population groups and for every major region, and was due entirely to an increase of 43 per cent in retail trade outlets between 1910 and 1930 in the 140 villages surveyed. Chain stores are not included in these figures.¹

Considering retail stores alone, as contrasted with all commercial establishments, the increase in the number between

¹ These comparisons are based on *Bradstreet's Book of Commercial Ratings*, whose figures in 1930 were checked by a field survey and the *United States Census of Distribution*. There were 7890 such enterprises in the 140 villages, 5476 devoted to retail trade, exclusive of 300 chain stores, as listed by Bradstreet. The *Census of Distribution* reports 5411 retail trade outlets inclusive of chain stores, and the field survey only a few less.

1930 and 1936, in the 140 villages was from 39.6 to 49.7, not counting the chain stores. The rate of increase was in inverse proportion to the size of the community. The largest gain was made in centers of 600 to 1000 population. All of it was in privately owned stores. The number of chain stores remained constant. Between 1910 and 1936 the increase was from 27.7 stores per village center to 49.7, again excluding chain stores, or 80 per cent in a quarter of a century. The growth of non-chain stores has been more rapid than that of the population. Deviations from the average among the regions were relatively slight, in no case as much as 25 per cent. In the main the South and Middle West were close to the average, the Middle Atlantic was below and the Far West above.

Interestingly enough, a multiplication of retail shops was observed even in villages which had lost 10 per cent or more population between 1920 and 1930, although this increase was not as rapid as in villages gaining population at a higher rate than the national figure. The ratio of population to number of stores was also larger in developing than in declining villages.

Village size was obviously a potent factor, not only in the total number of stores, but also in the type of commercial enterprise. Thus, two fifths of villages under 1000 had no furniture stores, and large villages had 6.5 apparel stores as compared with 1.5 for small centers.

Increase also shown in study of counties. As a check on these figures, a study was made of the retail stores in the rural areas of 33 counties lying in concentric tiers about Milwaukee, a fan-shaped area bounded by Lake Michigan and selected partly because it contained a relatively large number of small cities and large towns. Here, it was believed, if anywhere outside the industrialized East, urban competition would make itself felt in village trade. But so far as the number of stores is concerned, the results were the same as in the 140 villages, regardless of the size of the village. In every tier retail shops increased between 1910 and 1930 in places under 500, between 500 and 1000, and in the medium and large villages of 1000 to 2500. Besides, taking all zones together for the three size

groups, the increase was in three cases out of four more rapid between 1920 and 1930 than between 1910 and 1920. Indeed, for three tiers, villages between 1000 and 2500 revealed a slight average decline between 1910 and 1920, followed by sharp gains in the next decade.¹

Specialization. There are several reasons for this gain in the number of retail stores, even through the depression years. One is an increase in specialization. Automobile and accessory shops gained enormously, as did restaurants and soft-drink establishments. Most of the gain in these categories is due to the automobile, good roads, and the resultant increase in travel. The greatest increases were in the other retail group which includes beauty parlors, drug, novelty, and liquor stores, the last named obviously of recent origin. There was an average of one liquor store per village and 1.25 beauty parlors. Of this latter type there were almost none in 1924 and few outside the large communities in 1930. The details are given in Table 64.

TABLE 64. RETAIL OUTLETS: NUMBER OF STORES PER VILLAGE BY TYPE OF STORE

	Number of Local Stores per Village			No. of Local Stores per Village 1936	No. of Chain Stores per Village 1936	Total Stores per Village 1936
	1910	1920	1930			
All retail stores	27.7	32.1	39.6	49.7	2.8	52.5
Grocery ^a	2.4	3.1	4.3	3.9	1.0	4.9
All other food	2.5	2.1	3.3	2.5	.1	2.6
General	5.5	5.2	4.4	2.2	.2	2.4
Apparel ^a	3.7	3.6	3.7	1.7	.1	1.8
Automobile accessories	0.2	4.4	8.8	10.3	.8	11.1
Furniture	1.0	1.0	1.0	.9	.0 ^c	.9
Lumber	1.2	1.2	1.3	.5	.1	.6
Hardware	1.6	1.7	1.8	2.2	.1	2.3
Feed and farm supplies	1.4	1.4	1.4	.6	.0 ^c	.6
Restaurants and soft drinks	1.2	1.6	2.4	5.2	.0 ^c	5.2
All other retail ^b	7.0	6.8	7.2	19.8	.3	20.1

^a Does not include chain stores in 1910, 1920, or 1930. ¹

^b In 1936 this category included for the first time liquor stores, tourist camps, and boarding-houses.

^c Less than .1.

Source: Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years: A Survey of Village-Centered Agricultural Communities, 1930-1936*, Table 34, p. 102. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

¹ Zimmerman secured similar results for the entire State of Minnesota. Cf. his *Farm Trade Centers in Minnesota, 1905-1929*. University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, 1930.

This increase in stores offering specialized goods is a national phenomenon. The number of available services is increasing in rural as well as urban America, but the gain, despite the depression or perhaps because of it, is significant and by some will be considered an evidence of urbanization.

Growing trade areas. Another reason for the increased number of stores lies in the growth of trade areas. It will be remembered that the 1930 community areas of the 140 villages were larger on the average than in 1924, although in a majority it was more difficult to determine the 1930 service areas. Between 1930 and 1936 the trade areas of only six of the 140 centers declined, 46 increased, and the rest were not significantly changed. As more people were served, the community could support more stores.

Adaptation to changing conditions. An increasing number of stores were conducted according to modern merchandising methods, with the result that stocks and the physical appearance of stores and goods were improved. "The farmer doesn't burn up gas shopping around if he can get what he wants in his home town," said the owner of an up-to-date village department store. "We don't worry about the auto in A—," remarked another modern merchant. "It brings far more trade to us than it takes away. A lot of our customers would never get here if they had to drive a horse and buggy. Nor does our being on a cash basis hurt, as I really believe our patrons have come to prefer it." A third, in an Eastern village of about 1200, said: "We're more than holding our own, and in addition we're getting quite some business from city people who have found that our prices are a bit lower, and who would rather drive to a pretty village like this than put up with the congested traffic and bad parking conditions in R—. Every worth-while store on Main Street will tell you the same thing." This urban trade does not refer to transient or tourist business which all villages, except those remote from good roads, enjoyed to a greater or less extent.

A village banker declared, "After our stores modernized, our village added two hundred farm families to our regular cus-

tomers." Again, it was frequently stated, "People trade at home much more than they did two years ago." An editor summed up his local situation in these words: "When the automobile brought us into competition with the outside world, the town was dazed. Then stores modernized and prices were reduced. A couple of the inefficient places gave up. There was one consolidation. Now we're served by the optimum number of agencies and are holding our own against all comers." The president of a Farm Bureau declared: "Urban competition forced our merchants to become efficient. That stopped their exploitation of the farmer, and now we're all satisfied." In several villages, improvement began after trade surveys had been made, in one instance at the expense of the municipality. In four villages the chains were routed, but in most places there seemed to be room for both local merchants and chains.

One Southern village of 2200 widened the community area from 108 to 210 square miles. The Chamber of Commerce attributed this improvement to good roads and the automobile, modern merchandising, better transportation facilities, and the decline of a smaller competing center, a decline to which the aggressive policy of this village contributed.

The decay of places of from 100 to 300 or 400, or occasionally even larger centers, has been mentioned more than once, a decay attended by growing trade areas in contiguous villages, and sometimes accelerated by the removal of a prominent tradesman from a minor center to a larger village, who usually carried his clientele to the new location.¹

Retailers younger. Probably another reason for the ability of many agricultural villages to hold their own or improve their position during the 1920's, despite the agricultural depression, lies in the fact that a new generation of merchants was in command. In most villages which progressed during the decade

¹ The absorption of territory resulting from the decline of minor places occurred frequently in former lumbering areas which failed to adapt themselves to the needs of farmers moving into cut-over land, and hence the nearest farmers' town profited accordingly. This agrees with the findings of the study of industrial villages by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, a study which proved that farmers seldom patronized stores in former lumbering communities. Cf. Brunner, *Industrial Village Churches*, pp. 21-24. New York, Harper & Bros., 1930.

field workers found stores operated by sons of former proprietors, with an aggressive merchandising policy and the newest selling technique. The special census of 140 villages and 37 others showed that the average village proprietor's age was 45.5 in 1930 as against 45.6 in 1920; despite a lapse of ten years, the 1930 generation were somewhat younger. Almost exactly half were under 45; many of those over 45 were associated with the more skilled trades such as millinery, dressmaking, proprietors of "domestic and personal service" agencies.

Younger people also accounted definitely for a goodly amount of the increase in stores between 1930 and 1935. Recent college graduates especially showed considerable ingenuity in discovering opportunities for new merchandising services. One report from the 1936 study is quite representative:²

Twenty-four new places of business were established between 1930 and 1936. One half of these were started by persons who were natives of the community. More than half of the new proprietors were young persons just beginning their careers. Only two had previously left the village and returned as a result of the depression. Nearly all of the new businesses were ones which required little capital investment and were devoted to specialties, some of which had not been previously available.

Other comparable reports often stressed the value of these services new to the community, and told of inroads made in the trade of urban stores. Whether such stores continue to be able to compete with cities remains to be seen. But during the depression, when less money for travel was available, they did.

A smaller number of older persons, some of them previously retired, but who had some capital left, also opened stores, usually of the more conventional type.

Farmers buy nearer home. The answer to small town stability is that farmers, particularly, and other open-country dwellers as well, buy at home. In 1930, 23,504 farm, village, and town families replied to a questionnaire on trade habits circulated by *Women's World* of Chicago. Nearly four fifths of the villagers bought practically everything in their home town; three

² Brunner, E. de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, p. 101. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

fifths of the farm families stated that they did so. *Successful Farming*, a little earlier, interviewed the proprietors of stores in 455 villages and towns in agricultural areas of the Middle West. The average population of places under 2000 was 1033 and of those above 2000, 4474. In the smaller centers 72 per cent of all trade came from farms; in the larger group, 64 per cent. In the villages farm trade counted for 70 per cent or more of the business in all lines except jewelry, clothing, shoes and foods, lines in which the figure was over 60. In towns, 60 per cent of the trade in all commodities except jewelry, drugs and dry goods, was contributed by farmers.¹

A close-up of this situation was obtained in an intensive survey of a county where 276 families were found to be living on the farms they had occupied in 1921. Their shopping habits had changed little in the interim. Thirty-two, or 11.6 per cent as against 18, or 6.5 per cent, in 1921, patronized the county seat of 50,000; but some of them were nearer to this city than to any other center. Twenty-one families as against 14 in 1921 bought most of their supplies in neighborhood stores. Village shops claimed the rest — 244 families or 88.4 per cent in 1921, and 223 or 80.9 per cent in 1931.

COMPETITION FROM OUTSIDE

Is there no serious competition for village merchants from chain stores, mail-order houses, and urban department stores?

Chain stores. Interest in the chains was acute in the late 1920's and early 1930's; about a dozen states levied special taxes on them, though the constitutionality of such taxes has been attacked. There was active press and radio propaganda against the chains.

The agricultural village has been invaded in the last decade, and particularly in the last five or six years, by chains of all kinds; groceries, clothing, drugs, tobacco, gas, and even bank-

¹ The following items were included in the investigations: general stores, dry goods, hardware, automobiles, implements, building materials, drugs, furniture, clothing, shoes, foods, and jewelry.

ing chains. Grocery and clothing units were most frequently found in agricultural villages. One or more chains were operating in 107 of the 140 villages; in all but two of the Middle-Atlantic and Far-Western villages, three fifths of the Southern, and seven tenths of the Middle-Western. Two thirds of those lacking chains were places under 1000. In all, there were 300 chain units in 107 villages, an average of nearly three, more than double the number in 1924. Significantly, however, the number of chain stores in the communities studied remained constant at 2.8 between 1930 and 1936.

Results of chain competition. What are the consequences? In some places local merchants who could not adjust themselves to superior competition were routed. In one Eastern county seat the number of chains increased from two to nineteen between 1921 and 1930, altering the town completely. Sons of former proprietors, who had expected to become themselves proprietors, were now working for the chains or had emigrated. Every malady logically chargeable to chains seemed to exist in this town, and in some few other villages in our survey, but not in the majority of them. On the other hand, many villages seemed less worried by the chains in 1930 than in 1924, when there were half as many of them, and still less in 1936.

There were several reasons for this surprising change of attitude: (1) local enterprises had increased despite the chains; (2) merchants in a large number of villages had joined independent co-operatives or voluntary chains — now numbering 400 and operating, for instance, more grocery units than ordinary chains,² and in 1929-30 doing an annual business of nearly seven hundred millions. These merchants buy co-operatively, use group advertising and chain merchandising techniques. Some cover wide regions, others are county affairs. Voluntary chains and co-operatives have been successful in many villages and were approved by community leaders who spoke of lower consumers' costs, adequate retail profit and salvation from ruthless corporate chains as well. These villages considered the

² *The United States Daily*, Washington, D.C., July 3, 1931, and *Monthly Letter*, National City Bank, August, 1931.

problem solved. Merchants again and again said, "If the chains beat us, it is our own fault."

Many independent operators explained their ability to hold their trade on the ground that there was strong local prejudice against chains, which were considered an urban assault on the community. Residents rallied to the support of local stores. When the chain abstained from participation in community affairs, antagonism was often intensified. One large chain, wherever found, was, however, locally commended for its civic spirit and generosity.

Another reason for lessened concern over the chain was that it attracted people to the village who patronized non-competing stores. Chains were also commended for retaining former owners as their managers.

In spite of all this, chains constituted barely five per cent of all retail shops in agricultural villages, although their share of business was probably one tenth. Nor must it be forgotten that, as explained, chains have not everywhere captured the trade of a community. A canvass of nearly 15,000 rural homes by *Woman's World* of Chicago showed that 62.8 per cent patronized local merchants exclusively, and 14 per cent used both chains and locals. Less than one fourth, therefore, employed chains exclusively.

Another reason for the failure of the chain stores to grow during the depression years was the successful competition from the growing number of consumers' co-operative stores alluded to in Chapter XV.

There is to be seen operating in this situation a complex of social forces and attitudes as varied as effective co-operation against a common danger, local pride, self interest, community spirit. It is clear, too, as already stated, that merchandising is a social as well as an economic function, that trading with friends and neighbors of years standing, when on a satisfactory basis, is often more attractive than with outsiders. Where the local store extends credit, which chains never do, that also is a factor.

This is not to say that the chains have not brought grief to

individual merchants and to some communities. This has happened. But the situation, for the time at least, seems to have stabilized. Rural communities have developed an unexpected and surprisingly successful resistance to chain stores and in so doing they have confounded the prophets of gloom of the middle 1920's. Certainly thus far the chains have been confined for the most part to a few specific types of merchandising.

Competition of towns and cities. Some hint of the effect of urban competition on village trade has already been given, but conclusive data is difficult to secure. Only a few studies have supplied information as to where specific articles were purchased. In Walworth County, Wisconsin, 1034 families were interviewed; all used their nearest village or town for some service, two fifths patronized hamlet or cross roads stores, one half urban establishments outside the county, and 20 to 80 miles from their homes. Nearly three fifths spent an average of \$59 per family in 1929 in mail-order houses. The farther a family lived from village or town, the more centers it patronized. The same county had been similarly surveyed in 1914, and the chief change in buying habits concerned clothing, especially women's, drygoods, tires, and groceries. The use of the city for the first two and the mails for the second had greatly increased. Groceries were bought by mail by one fourth of the families, in 1914, who in 1930 traded exclusively in the community. Four fifths of those interviewed patronized mail-order houses because they believed that lower prices obtained. Others were influenced by convenience, quality and breadth of selection. Wider choice, better prices, and the lure of recreational trips accounted for urban purchases.

In an Ohio study,¹ mail-order and city purchases averaged about \$100 per family.

It seems natural, because of the inability of villages and towns to support all types of merchandising and because of the better stocks and selection available in cities, that there

¹ Cf. Denune, P. P., *The Social and Economic Relations of the Farmers with the Towns in Pickaway County, Ohio*. Ohio State University, Columbus, 1927.

should be great competition between urban and rural stores. It is surprising, therefore, that in spite of this and of the growth of chains, village stores have increased.

Rural sales by distance from city. Additional if less conclusive data on this point is supplied by the 1930 *United States Census of Distribution*. The analysis of population characteristics, farm production, and cultural factors, like school attendance, on the basis of concentric tiers of counties around cities showed that urban influences extend unmistakably to a considerable distance beyond the city county. Urban effect on retail sales is more delimited. Retail sales per capita are, city county \$489, in tiers one to four; for all eighteen areas, \$301, \$289, \$313 and \$326, respectively. This would seem to indicate that the attraction of city retail stores declines after the second tier. Curiously enough, the ratio of retail outlets for every thousand inhabitants follows the same trend, 13.1 in the city county and 12.5, 12.0, 12.9, and 12.7 in the tiers.

When total retail sales are divided into their components, the same essential pattern appears. Sales per capita by tiers for the eighteen areas and for the six most important types of stores are shown in Table 65.

TABLE 65. RETAIL SALES PER CAPITA IN VARIOUS TYPES OF STORES,
BY TIERS OF COUNTIES, 1930 — 18 AREAS

Type of Store	City County	Tiers of Counties			
		First	Second	Third	Fourth
Food.....	\$101.61	\$62.34	\$55.01	\$60.09	\$56.00
Automotive.....	100.16	69.74	70.53	76.32	90.98
General merchandising...	74.77	31.84	31.72	40.89	44.05
General country.....	8.23	25.07	28.38	27.04	31.48
Apparel.....	45.41	15.91	14.75	15.96	13.89
Furniture and household.	26.29	9.90	10.19	9.97	12.71

The table proves, however, that whereas inhabitants of the outer tiers seem to depend almost entirely on local dealers for automotive supplies, urban stores and mail-order houses combined tend to reduce local trade (outside the city county) in clothing, furniture and household supplies. Lower food purchases in outer tiers reflect the fact that food is raised on the

farm for home consumption, while a considerable amount is bought in general stores and hence does not appear separately in the census statistics. Regional analyses for each group indicate that the tier story for the eighteen areas as a whole describes fairly accurately the condition in every geographic area.

Summary. Despite the depression, the birth rate of rural stores was considerably higher than the death rate, though with banks, social organizations, and churches the reverse was true. Perhaps this is an indication of the growing adaptability of retail trade. Rural merchants, the country over, realized something of the nature of their troubles and took steps to overcome them. They sought to improve relationships with their clientele, especially farmers, and between village and country. They organized "buy-at-home" campaigns and sought, often with success, to enlarge their areas of service, turning improved roads to good account. They bettered their merchandising and rendered more specialized service. Some merchants, some communities failed; more did not. In the large the business situation has given evidence of the same vitality of rural America that is observable in other aspects of our study.

THE VOLUME OF RURAL TRADE

Thus far nothing has been said of actual store sales in 1930, of per capita expenditures, nor of the national volume of rural trade.

National figures. All told, the retail trade volume in the United States in 1929 just exceeded 50 billion dollars, 15.4 billions or 30 per cent of which was contributed by 52 per cent of the population, living in open country and in places of less than 10,000. It has been variously estimated, on the basis of standard of living studies by colleges of agriculture, of mail-order house sales, and of other scattered data, that these people purchased from 8 to 12 billions more in places of more than 10,000. Urban purchases in the countryside are meager. These figures, then, are another indication that the rural market is proportionately almost as large if not larger than

the urban. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates, as given several times by Dr. Tugwell, to the effect that in March, 1933, seven million persons were directly or indirectly unemployed because of the agricultural depression, are therefore comprehensible.

It should be remembered that this discussion of rural trade is based almost entirely on figures gathered before the intensification of the depression between 1931 and 1934. Moreover, we have discussed major trends only, and omitted illustrations of villages or hamlets which have failed, for whatever reasons, to share these trends.

Rural trade in 1933 and 1935. The national depression of 1929, following a period of agricultural difficulty during the 1920's, took a heavy toll in the country as well as city. In one-crop areas, particularly, the situation has been serious. In one such place, thirteen stores and two automobile agencies had succumbed, but in the main, according to the survey of retail distribution undertaken as a Civil Works project in 1933, a negligible loss in the total number of retail establishments occurred, although the dollar value of retail trade dropped to almost half, or \$25,037,000,000. The proportion of the total retail trade in the 700,000 stores in places of less than 10,000 population was almost exactly the same as in 1930, 29.5 per cent as against 30 per cent in 1929. This decline seems very small when it is realized that the low point in the agricultural depression was reached in the first third of 1933, and that agricultural adjustment payments did not begin to flow to the farmer until the last third of that year. Because of deflated prices, the decline in the volume of goods moved, although unmeasured, was obviously not as great as the loss in dollars.

Nationally, retail sales in places under 10,000 population declined 51 per cent between 1929 and 1932. In the village-centered agricultural communities the drop was 57 per cent. Net farm income also declined 57 per cent in these years.

A similar survey of American business was undertaken in 1935 by the Bureau of the Census in co-operation with the W.P.A. This study showed a 32 per cent gain in retail sales for

the nation as a whole over 1933. The total volume of business, \$33,161,276,000, was 68 per cent of 1929. Of the 25 states whose volume of business exceeded this latter ratio, 16 were more rural than urban. Ten more rural states came within five points or less of equaling the national rate of increase. Of the 12 states whose rate of gain in 1935 over 1932 exceeded 40 per cent as against the national average of 32 per cent, all but one were predominately rural states. This is a clear evidence of the recovery of rural purchasing power from the depression low and of the importance of rural trade in the economic life of the nation.

The Department of Commerce index of rural retail sales, based on reports from three mail-order houses and "a large group of chain units operating in small towns and cities of the agricultural regions," seems to show that conditions have remained reasonably good. With the three years 1929 to 1931 taken as 100, 1935 retail sales were 99.4; 1936, 114.8; 1937, 121.7; and 1938, 114.1.

Per capita sales in 1929. The *Census of Distribution* calculated per capita sales on the basis of municipal population, since it had no way of discovering the population of trade areas. It arrived at a figure of \$588.33 per capita for cities of 10,000 population and over, a figure which includes all sales made in such cities regardless of the purchaser's residence. This gives the city some advantage over the country, as will be seen later, and explains in part the rural per capita of \$243.87. The national average was \$407.53. The strategic position of the village in rural retail trade is clearly seen from the census. Per capita sales in 140 centers averaged \$768.19 when based on village population, another evidence of the amount of village and town shopping by open-country dwellers.

The study of 140 villages enables us to compare trade figures on the basis of total community population as determined by field workers.

On this basis in 1929 the per capita sales were \$301.45, excluding open-country or hamlet stores outside the village, but within its trade area, an item which would add \$10 to \$12.

This figure is 25 per cent less than the national average. When purchases of rural people in city stores and mail-order houses are added, and when it is considered that farmers and villagers raise far more of their own food than city dwellers, it becomes clear that the rural market, at least in 1929 when agricultural prices were 5 per cent below pre-war parity, was little if at all poorer than the urban. By 1933 the per capita sales on a community basis had dropped to \$128, a clear evidence of the intensified agricultural depression. The 1935 figure was \$180, an increase of 36 per cent, or 4 points above the national average. These small sales, moreover, were shared by more stores, so that sales per store in these rural communities dropped from over \$36,000 in 1929 to about \$14,000 in 1935.² The regional comparisons of these per capita retail sales as given in Table 66 are an interesting index of the relative intensity of the depression. The sales by size of community show the dominant position of places over 1750 population in retail trade.

TABLE 66. PER CAPITA RETAIL SALES IN 140 COMMUNITIES BY REGION AND SIZE, 1929, 1933, AND 1935

	1929	1933	1935
Total.....	\$301	\$128	\$180
Middle Atlantic.	316	150	204
South.	208	87	117
Middle West	345	137	191
Far West	356	155	238
Town.	401	163	222
Large.	332	152	218
Medium.	277	166	162
Small.	244	128	134

The data presented indicate how closely rural retail sales follow the fluctuations in farm income recorded in Chapter XV, another proof of the fact that it is impossible under modern conditions to separate the farm and village economy. Stability

² It must be remembered that retail sales do not make up the total income of many commercial establishments. Beauty parlors, tailor shops, and the like sell service as well as goods. Hotels and tourist camps rent rooms, and so on.

and prosperity for rural villages depend upon stability and prosperity for agriculture. Only a migration of industry to rural America can change that generalization.

RURAL INDUSTRY

In considering the place of factories in rural America, especially the inter-relation of industry and agriculture, a number of things must be kept in mind. As one of the authors says elsewhere:

When one thinks of "rural" America, one habitually thinks in terms of agriculture — of the open country with its wide farmlands and of the agricultural villages whose chief function is to serve the needs of the surrounding farm population; one is likely to forget that all that is rural is by no means agricultural. The fact is that approximately one village out of every four classified by the United States Census as "rural" has no connection with agriculture and no dependence upon it for a livelihood.

Statistically overwhelmed by the population of the farms and of agricultural villages are several million people who are in the country but not of it. In the places in which they live not corn and wheat but coal and iron are the gifts sought from Mother Earth. The technique employed is not cultivation that enriches while it produces, but the surgery of drills and steam shovels that wound the surface and, burrowing beneath, removes forever the prized veins of ore. Or perhaps the products of the fields and hills are here converted from standing timber into standardized lumber, from puffballs of snow-white cotton into piece goods of the newest shades and patterns.¹

The absorption in a single manufacturing enterprise to the exclusion of almost all other economic activity differentiates the industrial from the agricultural village. There are approximately 3500 to 4000 of the former, inhabited, in 1929, by nearly four million persons, devoted chiefly to the manufacture of textiles, to mining, lumbering or some specialized production of wide range, such as cosmetics, musical instruments, bricks, paper.

This does not mean that factory industries are lacking in

¹ Cf. Brunner, *Industrial Village Churches*, chap. 1. New York, Harper & Bros., 1930.

agricultural villages, but that they are smaller, more diversified, more dependent for both raw material and labor on immediate locality and especially on local farmers. Some non-agricultural rural industries, the so-called cottager or handicraft type, are frequently found where agriculture is backward or handicapped by poor soil. Among these are weaving, wood-working and similar activities in the Appalachians,¹ or household industries, governmentally promoted as an added source of peasant income in the Orient, especially India, Japan, and Korea.²

Industrial villages. The industrial village is usually overlooked by those interested in the amalgamation of agriculture and industry, yet it is most important. Moreover, its history is valuable to those who would bring a payroll to the support of agriculture. For three quarters of a century industrial villages have been doing this very thing, evolving a distinctive type of community, in which population is younger, with more males and children and fewer widows than in agricultural villages. There is small contact with the hinterland, partly because of location, as in lumbering centers, and partly because of independent interests. The average trade area is only four square miles, with only half as many stores as in the agricultural village. Farmers do not frequent its churches, farm children do not attend its schools. One eighth of its employees come from farm homes. Life is ordered by the factory whistle and the decision of an often distant and unknown executive. Industry dominates the social organization of the community, in which there is often a high degree of paternalism, never found in agricultural villages. In the South, where textile mills have been imported into agricultural villages, a great gulf usually exists between the old population and the new who live on "the mill hill." Mill-workers and agrarians are served by different churches, although of the same denomination. So

¹ Cf. Nason, W. C. *Rural Industries in Knott County, Kentucky*. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, 1932. Mimeographed.

² Mukerjee, *Rural Economy in India* (London and New York, 1920, Longmans, Green), chap. XIII, and Brunner, *Rural Korea* (New York and London, 1928), pp. 28 (Table v) and 61.

far from uniting industry and agriculture, the average case has bred social estrangement.¹

INDUSTRY IN AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES

Industry is seldom important in an agricultural village. In 1930 the average number of industries for each agricultural village was between three and four, not counting job-printing plants. This was ten per cent more than in 1924. Each village factory employed an average of *only* 22 full-time persons; more than three fifths of the factories, however, had less than 10 full-time employees and only one in twenty more than 100. Thus, less than one sixth of the persons gainfully employed in agricultural villages were factory laborers. During the first six years of the depression the number of industries per village dropped from 4.2 to 3.7. The number of establishments with less than 10 full-time employees rose to almost two thirds. Those with 100 or more declined slightly both in number and proportion. About one plant in twenty was in this largest group. Thus the average number of full-time employees in these village industries dropped to 21 as contrasted with 31 in 1924 and 25 in 1930. Forty-three per cent of the industries in agricultural villages were engaged in food processing and 7 per cent more worked with fiber products, such as cotton or lumber and with tobacco. This close association is important when we consider the enthusiasm for industrial decentralization. Thus far rural industries are closely related to the soil, especially many of the larger ones. Widespread decentralization must move against past trends and if successful will create a new industrial situation.

Although industry in these villages is intimately related to agriculture, the proportion of full-time employees drawn from farms appears to have fluctuated widely in the last fifteen years. In 1924 there was one such employee in every eight.

¹ For a full discussion of the problem based on a nation-wide field survey of 70 industrial villages, cf. Brunner, *Industrial Village Churches* (Harper & Bros., New York, 1930), especially chapters I to V and the Appendix, pp. 175-81. See also Woofter, J., and Winston, E., *Seven Lean Years* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1939), pp. 113-16.

Six years later the proportion had dropped to one in thirteen, although in the seventy industrial villages studied at the same time the proportion was one in nine. During the depression years, however, persons living on farms competed successfully with villagers for available jobs. One in five of the employees in these industries in 1936 lived in farm homes. At least three factors help to explain this change. Some retired farmers living in the village center with children employed in village industries were forced to move back to their farms, reacquired because of foreclosures. Some village industries employed persons from farm homes when it was realized that the addition of a wage to the family income would save a farm from foreclosure. Sometimes such employment was at the expense of village youth.

Part-time employment increases. The part-time employment of many persons, especially in such seasonal industries as canneries and fruit-packing plants has always been a feature in the economic and social life of rural communities. During the rush season the whole tempo of social life changes. Meetings and social events are held to a minimum, church attendance drops off. The major objective of the community from harvest to the completion of processing is to get the maximum production and return from the crop involved. During the depression a number of non-seasonal industries were compelled to resort to part-time employment, so that the proportion of such persons increased from 15 per cent in 1924 and 1930 to 30 per cent in 1936, and the number of persons called on for such service more than doubled. Slightly more than nine thousand individuals in the 140 communities secured some income from such part-time industrial employment. Some of the farmers who engaged in off-farm work, discussed in Chapter XIV were employed in this way.

Village industries have high death rate. Not only are industrial establishments in agricultural villages small, but their life cycles are apt to be short. By 1930 one of every four existing in 1924 had closed, although every defunct factory was replaced by 1.1 newcomers. Most newcomers (in the 140 agricultural villages) as well as the small net gain, are accounted for

by a net increase of 36 factories in villages located more than fifty miles from a city of over 25,000. In villages less than fifty miles from such centers there was a net loss. During the depression this death rate increased and the birth rate declined. Two fifths of the industries existing in 1930 had ceased operating by 1936. There were only two births for every three deaths. Here, then, is another suggestion of urban influence on rural areas. Insufficient capital, poor planning and leadership, competition from newer and more efficient plants, and fires, caused most of the failures other than those caused by the depression. Villages seeking a payroll had often invested unwisely in some of the ill-considered schemes of outside promoters. It is manifest, then, that in our sample of agricultural villages, factory industries were not as important as trade, but unlike trade, they put money into the farmer's pockets by purchasing raw materials from him.

Wages decline. Wages did not decline disproportionately to the cost of living, averaging about \$25 in 1930 and \$20 per week in 1936 for full-time employees. These averages exclude the South, where in both years wages were about 60 per cent of the level elsewhere. Despite the relative stability of these wages, labor unions appeared in these communities for the first time since they have been studied, but their presence was not general, only about one in twenty having such organizations.

One reason for the lack of union organization among the employees of small concerns in the villages is that these concerns appear to have a genuine interest in the welfare of their employees. The relationship between employer and employees in such small companies is, of course, much more personal and informal than is the case in large industrial plants. In this connection, the notes of a field-worker on a small plant in a Far-Western village are of interest:

"Mr. G. pays his men well, as they are expected to work for him during their whole lifetime, and he is directly interested in their welfare. All of them own their own homes in town, have some farm land in the district, and are well insured, and are holders of fairly large bank accounts."¹

¹ Quoted from Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, p. 125. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.

The average village concern was rather small and of uncertain future. But we must remember that there are some outstandingly strong industries in American agricultural villages, as is illustrated by a national survey in 1932 of 121 successful rural factory industries,¹ all but two of which were located in places of less than 6000 population and a majority in villages or hamlets.

Successful rural factory industries are small. This survey reveals the smallness of such enterprises (all but nineteen had plant valuations of \$200,000 or less), and it also shows that, like those in the villages, they were directly dependent upon local products for their raw materials. Therefore, in addition to furnishing a market for these, they were a source of some support to many farm homes.

The first fact is proved by the fact that more than half of these industries used cotton for textiles. The others were connected with food, forest, clay, and leather products. In all, one half of the raw materials used were purchased from farms.

The economic importance to farm homes of the wage payments is clear from the fact that one fourth or more of both full and part-time employees were from farm homes. Persons from the farm were earning from \$600 to \$1000 a year, part-time workers, from \$50 to \$400. Relatively few employees of farm origin were, however, themselves farmers.

The industries were tied into the community also by investment. Quite naturally, perhaps, the farmers were more interested in food processing plants than in others. They furnished two thirds of the capital and an even larger proportion of the stockholders for this group of industries. Other local people held most of the rest. The only considerable investments by outsiders were in textile, leather, and clay products, where they supplied from two fifths to two thirds the capital.

The survey reports that such enterprises benefited home life, since young people were kept at home and added income made radios, books, magazines, telephones, and household conven-

¹ Cf. Manny and Nason, *Rural Factory Industries*. United States Department of Agriculture, Circular 312, 1934.

iences possible. Similarly, community life improved in the average instance, roads were better, electricity was frequently made available at low rates, stores sold finer wares, school buildings improved, broader curricula were offered, and medical services were augmented.

Some of the details are of real interest. A successful vegetable canning company, co-operatively owned by farmers, not only canned local products but was paying mountain farm girls \$1200 yearly for picking wild strawberries to be made into jam and packed into attractive earthen jars produced by local farmers. A chair factory, three miles from the nearest village, employed 57 people, 21 from farms, and paid over \$46,000 wages in 1931. It maintained an experimental woodlot; chairs were bottomed at some farmhouses. Farmers used the wood shavings for bedding down cattle, and eventually as fertilizer.

This special group of successful rural industries reveals several important things. The recruiting of an appreciable fraction of labor in farm homes, and the purchase of local raw materials, made the factory a potent influence in community life. Local investments, well distributed, and local control made for adherence to the industry rather than the opposite. As in the agricultural villages, no labor trouble was experienced, although the opposite was true in industrial villages, mentioned above. This government survey makes clear that as in the case of stores, these local industries were institutions of some social as well as economic importance. If industries increase in rural areas there will be an increase also of certain socio-economic problems such as wage rates, conditions of labor, employer-employee relations.

There are certain indications that American industry is slowly decentralizing. The depression, with its experiments in subsistence homesteads, discussed in Chapter XIV, has stimulated the agitation for a union of agriculture and industry. The data thus far seem to warrant the conclusion that the merger is not progressing rapidly, that where individual cases succeed, at least in a social sense, the project must not introduce widely different social interests or population groups; it must utilize

the assets of and contribute to community life, and management, if not local, must at least take local mores into account.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. From the 1930 *Census of Distribution* find out and record the amount of retail distribution by types of stores and by rural and urban in your county.
2. Which types of retail establishments are tending to leave, which to remain, and which to come into agricultural villages? Give your explanation.
3. Enumerate the factors which seem to influence where farm people trade. How do these differ from those influencing village people?
4. What problems and what benefits come to local communities by reason of chain stores or chain banks?
5. Trace the effect of changes in transportation arrangements and facilities upon the trade of some village you know.

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CHAPTER XXII

RECREATION, SOCIABILITY, AND THEIR AGENCIES

RURAL people are often reluctant to admit that they are not always busy or that they have any "leisure time," but they are usually ready to go to a picnic or party, or to stop work and visit a while. Work and play have not been sharply separated, nor has work been considered only a necessary evil to be endured and strictly divorced from play. This general attitude has influenced the emphasis placed upon recreation, the forms and activities which it has assumed, and the organizations and agencies which have been developed for its promotion.

CHANGING EMPHASIS ON RECREATION IN RURAL LIFE

Rural society has shared, although in its own way, the general movement toward a greater emphasis on recreation which has been designated as one of the significant trends of recent times.¹ This increased emphasis takes so many different forms and expresses itself in so many diverse activities that it is difficult to trace; it ramifies society at nearly every point.

Rural recreation, during an earlier period, which might be roughly compassed by the years 1890 to 1920, could be described as largely informal and home-made, carried out on a home and local neighborhood basis. Popular activities included corn husking bees, quilting bees, box socials, picnics, special day celebrations, ring games, and social parties. Play was closely associated with work. Frontier conditions necessitated neighborhood co-operation for such things as threshing or construction of buildings. "Bees" such as barn "raisings" were a

¹ Steiner, J. F., "Recreation and Leisure Time Activities," *Recent Social Trends*, vol. II, chap. XVIII, p. 912. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1933.

combination of work and play, and the fall threshing was a social occasion for whole families to get together. But the increasing use of agricultural machinery since 1920 has reduced the need for local co-operative labor. Occasions for combining recreation and work have become less frequent. The general use of the automobile and the improvement of roads have provided rural people with the means of seeking recreation beyond the home and immediate locality. On the other hand, since 1930 a noticeable trend in rural social life has been the increase of informal recreation, and of home-talent activity.¹ Just as farmers and their families are turning to home and neighborhood-grown foods, so rural organizations are turning to their own members for talent and leadership.

Puritan traditions of emphasis upon the virtue of work doubtless limited recreation in many rural communities, for as Dr. Galpin has suggested, the "jaunty air of holiday," "the dressed-up costumes of leisure," and "the trappings of indolence," associated with urban life were unwelcome in farm life where the virtue of hard work had the backing of public opinion.² Despite all this background many kinds of leisure activities did develop, as has been shown, and more recently a greatly increased emphasis on the importance of the intelligent use of leisure time has augmented their variety and number.

Some rural leaders say that recreation should be a supplement or adjunct to other forms of activity. "People work together better when they learn to play together," says Dr. C. B. Smith of the United States Department of Agriculture Extension Service.³ A 4-H club leader in a western state said that the work of the National Recreation Association in his county made it easier to carry on his regular extension program and to enter new communities. It also induced better attendance at all meetings. An evaluation of recreation by such leaders has been expressed in the following terms: "Recreation

¹ Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 266. McGraw-Hill, 1933.

² Galpin, C. J., *Rural Life*, p. 261. Century Company.

³ Smith, C. B., *Relationships and Needs in Rural Sociology Extension*, American Sociology Society Papers, vol. 24, p. 216. 1929.

is a tool in organization work," "co-operation taught through recreation," "recreation develops experience in group action," and "an insurance against discontent."

More recently recreational activities are being undertaken for their own sakes, the ends sought being enjoyment, personality development, group experience, and appreciation of cultural values. This is the spirit of the Little Country Theater in North Dakota ² and of the North Carolina Playmakers, as described in the chapter on "Adult Education." Rural leaders urging this emphasis express their purpose as follows: "Activities are undertaken for their own sakes and not for any reward beyond themselves; they are relatively free, spontaneous, and enjoyable," and "development of socialized personality through self-expression and of higher ideals and standards in home and community through the cultural arts." With such motives many new recreational and cultural activities are being made available to country people, and their response is ample proof of their appreciation. Lynn Rohrbough, Director of Church Recreation Service, writes: "I've personally shifted almost entirely in a new direction in the past three years and find a big response to the new materials which might be classified as (a) craft side of games and other leisure tools, (b) rhythmic fun of folk origin, singing games, folk dances, folk songs, (c) traditional games themselves, and games of skill."

Specialization by interest and by locality. Nationally there has been a steady broadening of recreational activities and a great increase in the number of people taking part in them. Rural people have shared in this general expansion and they have also experienced, although at a considerably slower rate, the tendency toward specialization. Steiner has summarized this trend for urban society in the following manner: "The supplanting of the more simple pleasures of an earlier day by games and sports and social activities of a more elaborate nature requiring expensive facilities for their enjoyment has ushered in a regime of clubs and associations that have become a character-

² Kolb, J. H., "Twenty-five Years of the Little Country Theater," *Rural America*, May, 1939.

istic feature of modern recreation. The devotee of sport or the aspirant for social diversions attains his goal most readily by affiliation with organizations that specialize in activities of his choice."¹

The rise of special interest groups in rural society has been traced in Chapter VI. It was evident there that recreational and sociability interests were important in the formation of these groups. Forms of recreation which now prevail in rural society or show a tendency to increase include drama, music and art, social parties, picnics and festivals, group games and athletics.

Specialization has taken place in the direction of locality as well as of interest. Certain neighborhoods and town-country communities have found pleasure and profit in developing and perfecting distinctive activities. There are abundant illustrations including rose festivals, community fairs, county-wide play days, adult and children's massed musical productions, homecomings, family reunions, annual dramatic events, even the annual presentation of the *Passion Play* or *Wilhelm Tell*, distinctive flower and vegetable gardens, lilac drives, home and school grounds beautification, fish fries, community picnics or dinners featuring locally produced foods or those characteristic of nationality groups.

Wider contacts with secondary groups. The tendency for rural people to specialize their formal and informal recreation by interests and localities does not preclude their wider contact with the outside world. First evidence of such wider recreational contacts is the increased participation of country people in village athletics, in musical, patriotic and youth-serving groups.² This friendly and more intimate recreational association of farmer and villager has done much toward the creation of the larger town-country community described in Chapter V.

The automobile has made possible an increasing number of rural and urban contacts. City residents in greatly increasing numbers are using the country for hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking and summer living. Country residents are likewise

¹ Steiner, J. F., *Americans at Play*, p. 122. 1933.

² Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 250. McGraw-Hill, 1933.

seeking facilities offered by urban centers for theatricals, musicals, art exhibitions, athletic contests, motion-picture productions and public dancing and amusement places. Trips and tours of all kinds offer an opportunity for wider contacts with secondary or more impersonal groups.

Greater opportunities for recreation also bring problems. The points of the old romance triangle — the boy, the girl, the place — can now be shifted from the neighborhood with its personal and primary controls to three far-flung points. The farm boy may seek his companion in another community where he is little known and take her for an evening of entertainment to a distant, impersonal and commercialized amusement hall. This shifting emphasis requires newer forms of social control, lest the triangle become one of tragedy instead of romance.

Rise of the commercial amusements. Rural people have never been strangers to certain kinds of commercialized sports and entertainment. What country boy, at least of the generation previous to the one now in college, has not seen a horse race through the crack in the board fence at the county fair or has not had the responsibility for getting the whole family off to the circus under the big tent on the vacant town lots? In the more modern rural world, motion pictures and the radio have probably attained widest popularity. They reach directly into the rural community or the farm home with their programs and their advertising features. Thus rural and urban people are exposed at the same time to the same forms of entertainment. While the proportion of radio sets in farm homes is smaller than in urban homes, and while the high cost of installing sound equipment accounts for the absence of regular motion-picture programs in many of the smaller rural villages, nevertheless these two forms of commercial entertainment are more widespread than any other in rural society. Arguments continue pro and con as to the extent to which they fulfill the definition set forth for recreation. For example, opposition to certain types of motion-picture productions on the ground of morality has been strongly voiced by such organizations as the Legion of Decency. Agitation has started in certain groups for the re-

turn of broadcasting to public control, thus eliminating, as in England and France, private exploitation of this great source of entertainment and education.

Another form of commercial amusement which is making a problem for rural people according to a farmer opinion canvass reported by the magazine, *Successful Farming*, is the tavern with its liquor and its dances. Both youth and adult, according to this canvass, were agreed upon the issue. Old forms of local government seem poorly adapted to the modernized institutions. Some counties are attempting to cope with the problem through zoning ordinances. Business districts are set aside, often in open-country areas, and all business enterprises, including taverns, dance halls, filling stations, and stores, are confined to them. Within the districts regulations are imposed such as setback lines for buildings, space for parking, and other provisions intended to insure health, safety, and morals.

In the depression years. The opinion of rural leaders everywhere seems to be that there has been a notable increase in interest during the depression period in local and non-commercial recreation activity.¹ This has come about only naturally because funds were lacking and increased numbers of young people remained in rural communities. They and the adults developed home-talent activities, rediscovered folk games and dances, and revived out-of-door recreation. The movement was encouraged and stimulated by the Agricultural Extension Service, by leaders employed through W.P.A., and by greater attention given to recreation by schools, especially consolidated schools, by churches, and by various rural organizations. As the depression lifts, there seems to be somewhat of a tendency to revert, at least in some areas, to a greater patronage of commercial amusements, such as moving pictures. Sunday movies are said to be increasing again in villages and small towns in some states. However this may be, it is certainly true that both farm men and farm women, as well as their children, do take time for recreation and for social activity

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *Research Memorandum on Rural Life in Depression Years*. Bulletin 34, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1937.

of various kinds, and the number and variety of these activities appear to be increasing.

RURAL RECREATION ACTIVITIES PRESENT VARIED POSSIBILITIES

Many reasons can be found for the very wide variety of recreational activities in rural society. Many forms of leisure or semi-leisure activity were developed in various sections of the country and then transferred to other sections as the people moved. Holidays and festivals of eastern American and European origin were carried to the new places of settlement. Recreational activities are often combined with those of an educational, cultural or even vocational character; for example, the harvest festival or the community fair has its demonstrations and exhibits, as well as its games and dances.

Rural people have likewise been more interested in those types of activities which provide opportunity for participation as well as attendance. The highly commercialized facilities for the enjoyment of passive amusements have been more characteristic of the city than the country.¹ This has made for a wide variety of activities in rural areas.

The inference should not be drawn from the enumeration which follows, that all rural communities are well cared for, although every activity listed is actually in use in one or more communities. Some of these activities were also included in the chapter on "Adult Education"; one reason for the popularity of adult education is its appeal to recreational interests.

Music — group singing, chorus, glee club, quartet, orchestra, band, and festival. In any gathering, public or private, there is nothing that will afford everyone better opportunity for expression and enjoyment than will participation in some form of music, especially singing. Music has had and continues to have a very large place in the many organizations and activities of rural life.

¹ Steiner, J. F., *Recent Social Trends*, vol. II, p. 95.

The emphasis placed upon group singing during the war gave its development a decided impetus. It is a valuable means of creating group morale. Community leaders say that "sings" are most successful when strictly informal, and when all members of the group join in freely. They say that the matter of leading such singing, sometimes considered a problem, is not difficult to solve.

Choruses are organized on a neighborhood or community basis for adults or for young people or even for children. A children's chorus is an especially attractive form of group singing, and with the wealth of published music now available can easily become a part of the program of most schools, churches, and community clubs.

The quartet, either single or double, although bringing fewer members of the community together, forms a more specialized kind of musical organization. It gives opportunity for doing more intensive and more finished work than the larger group. It is often named after the community from which its members are drawn, but its influence may extend far beyond its own locality.

Orchestral music may blend both string and wind instruments and bring together individuals with varying degrees of skill and training. Many communities have persons qualified to direct an orchestra; others find it possible to engage the services of a trained director who can come once or twice a month, and who may serve, as well, as private tutor for beginners. Frequently an arrangement is worked out with the local high school whereby one of its teachers can help with the community orchestra.

The band probably has a more popular appeal in many communities than almost any other form of musical organization. Its success depends largely on good leadership and faithful membership. Leadership can be secured on much the same plan as that suggested for the orchestra. Many local bands are maintained at partial public expense by villages or school districts. One of the factors in the improvement of town-

country relations which was repeatedly noticed in the studies of local communities was the band and its weekly concerts. The whole countryside turned out for the concert. Members of the organization were drawn from both farm and village.

The music festival, whether on a large or small scale, on a community, county, or state basis, is a fitting finale to a season's program. Choral as well as orchestral groups can be brought together in a massed ensemble under skilled leadership. In fact, there is no finer way of bringing country and city people together than through their interest in music. This was done, for example, in one county recently when about 1000 rural children and 500 rural adults, comprising the chorus, joined with the city civic orchestra under its accomplished director in providing an afternoon of real enjoyment.

Drama and pageantry — plays, pageants, folk dancing, pantomime, readings, story telling, marionettes, and puppetry. Recent surveys in a number of states reveal a greatly increased activity in dramatics. In addition to its sociability, drama quickens the imagination, cultivates and gives opportunity for the expression of emotions, and provides group experience. Not only the actors but other members of the community or the organization are drawn into the enterprise. For example, in the production of that interesting folk play, "The Merry, Merry Cuckoo," the men of a rural community club came together at the schoolhouse and constructed the house front and the picket fence. The women made the costumes and the curtains for the stage set.

The play is probably the most common form of drama to be found in rural communities. The one-act play is especially popular and lends itself to rural groups. The choice of the play and careful attention to the casting of characters are especially important for its success. Much latent talent is available and many stories could be told of how intensive work on such a character as Jean Valjean, for example, had literally transformed a personality by releasing it from suppressions which traced back to boyhood.

The pageant has many possibilities for rural communities since it deals with historical, mythical or allegorical subjects more largely than does the play. It is a means of education as well as of entertainment. Many rural groups have presented an effective pageant based on local history and produced by the descendants of the original characters. In one community so much enthusiasm was developed in the undertaking and so many interesting historic things were discovered that a local museum was established.

Folk dancing and interpretative dancing may be considered a form of pantomime. Accompanied by music, they are an effective way of portraying grace and beauty of movement. Folk dancing, especially, has been receiving increased attention in many sections of the country whose residents trace their forbears to foreign lands. Many first generation Americans are rather anxious to throw off foreign traditions and customs, while those of the second generation often welcome the chance to ransack attic trunks for costumes and to revive folk ways in dance, song, play, and story.

Good story-telling is an art which is greatly appreciated. The country and small town abound with story-tellers who ply their art in small, informal groups, but many communities have not learned how to incorporate them into the more formal meetings, or how to use them for constructive entertainment. Folk tales are a rich source of material. This seems to be a world-wide trait of rural people. The traveling story-teller is still an institution and a social force in parts of Asia.

The art of puppetry and marionettes has also been revived in recent years in many country districts. A wide range of activity is provided because the ancillary arts of the theater can be practiced by painting the drops, making the costumes, constructing the properties, as well as selecting or writing the stories or plays. Thus, the arts and handicrafts along with literature, folklore, religion or health can be made topics for study.

Holidays and festivals. Christmas, New Year's, Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, April Fool's Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Valentine's Day, and Thanksgiving, as well as

other special days, are all occasions for rural community programs or festivals.

A beautiful and growing custom for rural villages or small towns is the community Christmas celebration. A tree is lighted in the public square, and streets, stores and homes are decorated with pines and candles. There is often the song festival, a cantata or a Christmas play, such as Douglas Hyde's *The Nativity*.

Picnics and field days. The picnic is sure to stand very high on any list of popular recreational events. Mention cannot be made of the many forms which it may take. One rural community has carried the idea of an annual picnic to a very high degree of organization by establishing and incorporating a picnic association under the laws of the state. Each year since 1905 the event has been held as a town and country enterprise attended by thousands of people. Surrounding communities would not think of holding rival picnics on that day.

Children and adults often gather for play days which are held in some school yard. One rural school may act as host for the neighboring schools or even for all the schools in a county. If the affair is large, many committees are needed and preparations are made far in advance. Games and events must be suited to all the different groups present, the picnic dinner made a success, and the afternoon ball game becomes a fitting climax.

The community fair in many localities is a kind of field day or harvest festival. It is often held before and as a sort of local preparation for the county fair. It may center about the work of the agricultural department of the local high school, or it may be the occasion for neighborhood clubs to meet in friendly rivalry at a central community headquarters.

Social parties and group games. During winter months, social parties and games are especially popular in rural communities. They may be organized around occasions such as holidays, or they may occur informally when neighbors and congenial groups gather for visiting, card playing, dancing or singing.

A wide variety of activity is included under the title of group

games. There has been a revival of interest in these games, especially during the depression, when it has been difficult to buy gas for the automobile or pay admission to commercial entertainment. There are the circle games, shuttle relays, table games, checkers, chess, ping pong, croquet, stunts, mixing games, horse-shoe pitching, folk and square dances, and the social dance. Folk games are being revived in some communities and foreign games, especially the Oriental, are being studied and introduced.

Community athletics and sports. Outdoor and indoor sports and athletics have long been favorites of farm and village people. Baseball, basketball, volley ball, and horse shoes or quoits are probably the most common, and the ones which develop the largest groups and stimulate the most community interest and enthusiasm. Teams for contests may be composed of either open-country or small-town groups or both. Baseball and quoits are particularly adapted to the country, while basketball, because it is played indoors during winter months, is usually centered in town or village.

The automobile and good roads make it possible to organize intercommunity leagues of many kinds, kitten-ball for women, men, girls, or boys, men's baseball leagues, quoit-pitching tournaments and tug-of-war contests. Amateur rules are drawn and schedules arranged. Plans may include eliminations until a county play-off is arranged in order to select a team to go to state finals; for example, to the State Fair. This kind of recreational program raises important questions regarding parks and playgrounds in rural areas, which will be discussed briefly in the last section of the chapter.

Arts and handicrafts. Interest in the arts and handicrafts has not been widely developed in all rural areas. Some communities, however, have made much of them and have found in them not only gratifying recreation but profitable sources of auxiliary income. Difficulty is sometimes experienced in financing such group projects and in finding competent leaders. In some communities, however, older members of the community, grandmothers perhaps, have been induced to revive their early

or their old-country crafts, and to teach the younger generation knitting, crocheting, hooking, embroidery or appliqué work. Old or discarded materials are used where possible. Wood carving, block printing, building bird houses and kites are taught to boys and men. Far too little has been done with the fine arts, painting, sculpture, engraving or etching. Many simple and inexpensive ways of learning principles of line, design and color, as well as rhythm, balance and harmony can be worked out if leaders will put their best thought into it.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

Practically all agencies and institutions which are concerned with rural life are giving increasing attention to recreation. National as well as local agencies are attempting to work out modern programs as the following statement indicates: "There is scarcely a national agency today concerned with education, character development, health, spiritual life, the moral and social conditions of life, and work, which is not spending time and thought on this problem of leisure."¹

Home, school, church as recreation agencies. The rural home has always been a recreational center for its own members and for friends and neighbors as well. The range of social activities in some homes has been rather restricted, to be sure, and they have been informal and personal in character. According to their own reports, modern rural people spend more time in reading and listening to the radio than in any other form of recreation. The time spent in reading averaged 292 hours and in listening to radio programs, 280 hours per person per year for 900 farm families in the years 1929 and 1930.² Three years later it was found that members of the same families had reduced considerably the amount of time and money devoted to these two forms of recreation. Many radio batteries had not been recharged or replaced. Magazine and newspaper sub-

¹ Faust, J. W., "Leisure and Living," *Child Welfare*, vol. 25, p. 399, March, 1931.

² Kirkpatrick, E. L., McNall, P. E., and Cowles, May, *Farm Family Living in Wisconsin*, Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin 114, January, 1933.

scriptions were stopped, books were not purchased. The effects of the depression were definitely noticeable.

Schools and churches are also taking a more active leadership in rural recreation, although it must be recorded that many of them, through lack of facilities, trained personnel or limited vision, are lagging far behind. Local as well as other studies indicate rather clearly that consolidated schools, on the average, are giving greater attention to recreation than small unit schools.¹ As was pointed out in previous chapters, progressive village high schools in agricultural communities are leading the way in community-wide programs, and there are evidences of a quickening interest in recreation on the part of rural churches.

Types of rural social organizations. Increased emphasis upon recreation, and the trend toward specialization have led to a wide variety of social organizations. Whether formal or informal in character, they have been designed to help individuals or groups secure more of the amenities and pleasures of life. On the whole, they are less formal and less institutional than many of the other organizations described in preceding chapters, and, therefore, can respond more readily to changing conditions. An opportunity was afforded by the restudy of 140 agricultural villages to examine at close range the various organizations in rural society which were devoted to recreation and sociability and to observe the changes and trends during the period of about twelve years.²

First of all, it was necessary to make some classification of the social organizations found in these village communities. The wide variation and the interstitial character of recreational activities which have been detailed in the early part of the chapter, have given rise to many kinds of organizations, some of which almost defy classification. The following types have been agreed upon, however, exclusive of those under the direct auspices of schools and churches:

¹ Steiner, J. F., *Americans at Play*, p. 155. McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933.

² Brunner and Kolb, "Social and Recreational Organizations," *Rural Social Trends*, chap. ix. McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933.

Athletics. Baseball, basketball, tennis, golf, fishing clubs, and the like.

Civic. Organizations designed for the good of the community, as W.C.T.U., charitable, welfare agencies, or fire departments when social.

Educational. Parent-Teacher Associations, literary and study groups.

Fraternal. All lodges or secret orders of the fraternal type.

Musical. Bands, orchestras, glee clubs, choral societies.

Patriotic. American Legion and its auxiliary, G.A.R., Sons of Veterans, D.A.R., W.R.C.

Social. Community social clubs, card clubs, other than bridge, all other organizations chiefly sociable, regardless of minor functions.

Bridge.

Socio-religious. Ministerial associations, social organizations under religious but not local parish auspices, Young Men's Christian Association, Knights of Columbus, and its women's organizations.

Socio-economic. Business men's organizations, service or luncheon clubs.

Farm Bureau, including Home Bureau.

Grange.

Political.

Townsend and Social Justice Clubs.

Youth-serving. Hi-Y and Pioneers, Boy and Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and all others except junior lodges and 4-H Clubs.

4-H Clubs.

Changes in number and type of organizations. The outstanding characteristics of local social organizations are change and rapid turnover. Their life cycle is relatively short compared with that of any other organization found in rural society. Some of the trends observed before 1930 have continued while other changes were caused by the depression. Organizations

of different kinds fared differently during the period under discussion; some have grown, some have failed, and some that are of a new type have come into being. The inclusion of new types in the tables presented in this chapter made it necessary to reclassify all the organizations studied in 1924 and in 1930.¹ Therefore some of the figures are not in complete agreement with those that are given in *Rural Social Trends*.

Nearly one third of all organizations found in 1930 were inactive or had died entirely by 1936. Scarcely two fifths of those studied in 1924 were to be found in 1936. During the period 1930 to 1936 the number of new or reorganized groups equaled about one fourth of those which were active in 1930. Between 1924 and 1930 the new organizations slightly exceeded those that had died, while in the latter period, 1930 to 1936, the reverse was true. The accompanying table gives the changes in numbers by type during the latter period.

TABLE 67. CHANGES IN NUMBER OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, BY TYPE — 140 VILLAGES

Type of Organizations	Organizations in 1930		Organizations in 1936		Net Change
	Total Number	Av. per Village	Total Number	Av. per Village	
All types.....	2925	20.9	2753	19.7	- 172
Athletic.	94	.7	69	.5	- 25
Civic.....	293	2.1	255	1.8	- 38
Educational....	187	1.3	197	1.4	+ 10
Fraternal.....	906	6.4	750	5.4	- 156
Musical.	80	.6	64	.5	- 16
Patriotic.....	256	1.8	264	1.9	+ 8
Social.....	223	1.6	214	1.5	- 9
Bridge.....	195	1.4	280	2.0	+ 85
Socio-religious.....	25	.2	24	.2	- 1
Socio-economic.....	142	1.0	146	1.0	+ 4
Farm Bureau.....	111	.8	98	7	- 13
Grange.....	55	.4	55	.4	0
Political.....	...	...	4	.0	+ 4
Townsend and Social Justice	...	...	59	.4	+ 59
Youth-serving.....	192	1.4	163	1.2	- 29
4-H.....	166	1.2	111	.8	- 55

¹ Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.

The actual number of organizations declined about 6 per cent in the six-year period and the average per village decreased from 20.9 to 19.7, although there was an actual gain during this time in the village population. The greatest decline in actual number was among those organizations of a fraternal nature. This was generally true in all sizes of villages and in all regions. Lodge memberships were also dropping and attendance was reported as becoming poor. Young people were not joining these organizations. Despite the decline in number and strength, fraternal organizations are still about triple in number of any single type; the next most numerous being bridge clubs, which increased at rapid rates during the past five years. Organizations given to athletics and sports continued to drop out after 1930 as they had in the previous period. The same was true of musical organizations. Both of these types are high in cost, as will be shown later, their financial outlay being two or three times that of other types. Therefore, the depression took its toll among them.

It is possible by use of such enumeration to calculate both birth and death rates for social organizations. From such a calculation it was found that the death rates exceed birth rates for all types except educational, political, socio-economic, and the bridge clubs. The most stable were those that showed some gains in membership. Social and socio-religious organizations declined very little. New types appearing for the first time in the later period were the Townsend and Social Justice Clubs. Organizers for the Townsend Clubs succeeded in establishing units in 100 of the 140 village communities. The depression gave them ready candidates for members among the unemployed, the elderly people, and those generally disgruntled with the times. Their number rose quickly, but during more recent years there was evidence of their decline. They did not prove popular among the citizens who did not wish to join, although many feared their political strength.

Variations in types and numbers of social organizations were greater by geographic regions than by size of village. The Far West was the most highly organized region in 1924, but there

was a decline in number of such organizations in small and middle-sized villages by 1930. Nevertheless, this region continues to have increased numbers of organizations per village. It was the only region in which numbers increased after 1930. The South continues to have the least number of organizations per village. The Middle Atlantic region showed greatest stability between 1930 and 1936, although in the earlier period it experienced rapid increases.

The comparisons show that organizations with some overhead connections or intercommunity affiliation and with some help or supervision of salaried leaders, both of which were found in Farm and Home Bureaus, Parent-Teacher Associations, and in local Chambers of Commerce, are most likely not only to survive but also to multiply.

Changes within the organizations. Changes within organizations are usually more important for the community they serve than changes in type and number. No analysis of the inner life and programs of organizations will be attempted here, but some clue to internal conditions can be found from a brief description of changes in memberships, attendance, finances, and physical equipment.

(1) *Memberships decreased.* The tendency among all organizations to lose members, found in the period 1924 to 1930, continued to 1936. The average decline was from 60 persons to 55.6 for the later period.

If the newly organized Townsend and Social Justice Clubs, which reported large memberships, had been omitted from the table, the average would be still lower. During the same periods, as has been previously noted, the population of the local village communities increased. Therefore, it is apparent that social organizations have failed, at least numerically, to hold their own. The table on page 568 shows that the following types of organization increased their membership rolls: athletic clubs, 4-H clubs, youth-serving, social, musical, socio-religious, socio-economic, and farm bureau. All others had lost. Among the fraternal groups the losses were most noticeable, while the farm economic organizations made greatest gains. The A.A.A.

program described in an earlier chapter may have some relation to these changes in membership among farmers.

When those social organizations which had continued throughout the two periods of study were considered separately, it was evident that size of organization is related to ability to survive. In general, groups that did survive were about double the size of those that did not. They were also larger than those organized after the depression began. Groups seemed to find it more difficult to recruit new members during this period, but once in the organization, the tendency was for the members to remain.

TABLE 68. MEMBERSHIP IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, BY TYPE — 140 VILLAGES

Type of Organization	Number Reporting		Average Membership	
	1930	1936	1930	1936
All types.	2495	2381	60.0	55.6
Athletic.....	82	51	41.0	57.3
Civic.....	264	240	51.8	50.6
Educational.....	159	168	65.9	57.0
Fraternal.....	834	700	91.1	79.2
Musical.....	79	57	26.6	30.6
Patriotic.....	244	258	52.5	44.7
Social.....	185	198	33.2	34.7
Bridge.....	114	152	14.3	13.5
Socio-religious....	25	23	68.8	75.1
Socio-economic....	133	139	40.5	47.9
Farm Bureau.....	83	78	45.6	50.9
Grange.....	51	50	121.4	120.3
Political.....	...	4	...	32.0
Townsend and Social Justice	...	15	...	293.7
Youth-serving.....	172	152	29.6	30.8
4-H.....	70	96	19.4	23.9

(2) *Attendance increased.* Attendance is probably a better index of vitality than membership. Therefore, the improvement in attendance throughout the two periods under study, in the face of loss of membership, is significant. It suggests that surviving organizations are meeting social and recreational needs even more satisfactorily than when the rolls are larger but contain inactive members. Improvement was

found in every region, particularly in the South and in the Far West.

The life cycle for special-interest groups outlined in an earlier chapter is clearly shown in the social organizations found in these village communities. The younger organizations had a larger proportion of their members in attendance at meetings; interest was great during the first years. However, there are other factors than attendance which must account for the demise of such organizations, since there was a tendency for attendance to keep up to the end, at least for the organizations found in the 140 agricultural village communities.

TABLE 69. ATTENDANCE AND PER MEMBER EXPENDITURES FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE — 140 VILLAGES

Type of Organization	Per Cent of Attendance		Per Member Expenditures	
	1930	1936	1930	1936
All types	39.8	43.3	\$5.67	\$4.03
Athletic.	93.2	45.8	18.55	8.66
Civic.	51.3	51.8	6.17	5.97
Educational.	58.8	61.1	1.69	1.41
Fraternal.	25.2	28.5	4.33	3.89
Musical.	79.6	85.2	14.83	10.45
Patriotic.	34.0	40.7	6.20	3.79
Social.	60.4	57.7	6.46	1.62
Bridge.	94.5	99.8	1.98	1.22
Socio-religious	34.0	36.7	3.87	4.90
Socio-economic.	69.2	61.1	18.79	8.42
Farm Bureau.	41.8	57.0	5.74	4.63
Grange.	29.9	29.5	1.91	2.55
Political. . . . .	...	51.6	...	2.39
Townsend and Social Justice. . . . .	...	48.3	...	.35
Youth-serving.	75.8	71.4	3.27	2.19
4-H.	87.8	91.4	1.63	1.01

(3) *Finances decline.* The tendency to reduce expenditures, evident before 1930, continued until 1936. The decline during the period was almost 30 per cent, which is slightly smaller than the reduction made by the churches in these same communities. In 1930 the per member expenditure for all types of social organizations was \$5.67 and in 1936 it was \$4.03. Variation among types of organizations can be seen in the table. Athletic

organizations cut per capita costs by more than one half, yet they are still relatively high. Musical organizations are highest, while the Townsend Clubs are lowest. This trend for social organizations to follow the business cycle in financial affairs was general in every geographic region. In the Far West the drop was most violent. A comparison between those organizations which continued throughout the whole period beginning with 1924 and those that fell by the way suggests that conservative financing is associated with long life. The per capita costs for those organizations that died averaged about 35 per cent higher than for those which survived.

(4) *Buildings and equipment increased.* Slightly more than 10 per cent of the organizations studied had their own buildings in 1930. More than half of the buildings were lodge halls, but these types of buildings are not the ones that are increasing in number. The increase is in the number of publicly owned community buildings, swimming pools, and playgrounds. In a canvass of agricultural extension leaders in all states, one third reported an unprecedented call for help in planning community buildings; another one sixth reported some requests. The movement was greatly augmented by the availability of W.P.A. labor and by the apparent desire for rural people to have a place in which to house their recreational and social activities. One rural New England State reported plans completed for 100 such community buildings, while 55 others already approved by W.P.A. administrators were in process. In addition, school buildings and equipment are being used in increasing numbers for community and social purposes.

Country and village relations in social organizations. Although few social organizations are designed for country or village people exclusively, yet in reality there is a tendency to specialize according to interests and localities, as has been observed. Such organizations as the Grange, Farm Bureau, and farmers' clubs are designed for country groups, although they do not exclude villagers; in fact, their meetings are often held in the village. In some sections of the country, notably the East and South, members from the village are frequently found in 4-H

clubs and homemakers' groups. Country groups are usually organized about the more strictly social and home-talent interest; they are personal and primary in character, and include kinship, neighborhood, or congeniality groups.

Increased patronage by country people of what can be considered village social organizations was found, although the statistical increases were not as marked as the testimony of country and village people would lead one to expect. The proportion of country members in all social organizations increased only slightly from 1930 to 1936, from 34.2 to 35.3 per cent respectively. Athletic groups have a relatively high percentage of country members, although there was a decline in the last period. Civic and educational organizations in the South and Far West show an increased percentage of country members. Likewise in the Far West, open-country people participated more largely in musical organizations in 1936 than they did in 1930. There appeared to be relative exclusion of country people from social clubs in the South and from bridge clubs in all regions. Socio-religious organizations, on the other hand, were more likely to include a relatively larger proportion of country members. This was also true of the Townsend Clubs, as well as of those organizations which have definite farm backgrounds, such as 4-H clubs, Farm Bureau, and Grange. In the South and in the Far West, the Farm Bureau had a larger portion of its members from the village in 1936, but for the nation as a whole the reverse was true.

County-wide organization, a new development. The trend for local groups to federate and to form county-wide associations as described in the chapter on "Special Interest Groups," is pronounced among recreational and social organizations. Such groups as Grange, Farm Bureau, 4-H clubs, and Parent-Teacher Associations used this plan from the first. Other types of organizations have followed, but in recent years some of the newer types, for example, those for older rural youth, use the county as their local unit of organization. Good roads, more automobiles, and the tendency to specialize one's social interests all contribute to this movement. Other influences toward

county plans are the experiences gained through W.P.A. county recreation programs and the demands coming from some organized groups for recreation to be on a county-wide basis. At a conference of farm women held in Washington in 1934, the idea was advanced that each county should have a recreational leader, publicly paid.¹

There is no doubt that county agencies and county federations have come to stay and to assume greater significance in rural social affairs. Yet many a county is too poor or has too low a population density to make a complete county plan possible. The question may also be raised as to whether the county can actually become more than an administrative unit for those organizations which are local or community in type and function. This problem will be given more consideration in Chapter XXIV, but the place of the public in this whole field of recreation and sociability must have further consideration here.

Public recreational policies and agencies. The public, as a body of taxpayers, is becoming increasingly concerned and involved in recreation. The great rise in commercialized recreation is one issue. Most commercial agencies have profits for their motive and, when their "vested interests" are challenged, "public welfare" must be defined and defended. Recreation is urged by social welfare leaders as a means of preventing juvenile delinquency and as a form of therapy for emotional maladjustments. For these and other reasons, legal control and government supervision of recreational agencies and activities are on the increase. This seems necessary in order that the youth triangle keep, as far as possible, its romanticism and escape, as far as possible, its tragedies.

On the more constructive side, public policies are needed to take advantage of the many opportunities for recreation in modern rural life—parks, playgrounds, scenic and historic spots, wild-life sanctuaries, community buildings and equipment, and, not the least, trained and competent leadership. Steiner points out that the need for public recreational facilities

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *Research Memorandum on Rural Life in Depression Years*, Bulletin 34, Social Science Research Council. New York, 1937.

and policies first arose in congested urban districts, but that the situation at present requires an extended view, reaching beyond either rural or urban interests to a national scope.¹ The invasions of village and open country by new types of organizations modeled on urban patterns and affiliated on a county or nation-wide basis, together with the excursions of urban people into the country, seeking recreation and respite, are not only modifying the leisure-time habits of both rural and urban residents, but are linking them together in the need for national and regional planning.

In rural communities, schools have opportunities which they have thus far not fully realized. They are the public institutions of greatest frequency in rural society; they have the most physical equipment, and the largest paid personnel, as Chapter XVII has definitely shown. Theirs is the task of stimulating greater recognition of recreational need, of directing it into wholesome channels of activity, and of providing in larger measure leadership and equipment for youth, both in school and out, and for the adult members of their communities, as the chapter on "Adult Education" has already emphasized.

Local government has opportunities before it also. One of its chief contributions can be in the sphere of planning beyond local corporate boundaries. The playground of the modern city must extend into surrounding territory. Towns, villages, and the open country are immediately involved. This train of thinking takes one into the whole question of land and policies regarding its most appropriate uses. Several states are definitely attempting land-use planning under various legal forms in which recreation is recognized as a legitimate land use. May it not be considered one of its highest uses?

The importance given to public welfare in modern life is stated very well by a State Supreme Court Justice in the following terms:

In this day none will dispute that government in the exercise of its police power may impose restrictions upon the use of property in

¹ Steiner, J. F., chapter 18 in *Recent Social Trends*, vol. II. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1933.

the interest of public health, morals, and safety. That the same restrictions may be imposed upon the use of property in promotion of the public welfare, convenience, and general prosperity is perhaps not so well understood, but nevertheless is firmly established by the decisions of this and the Federal Supreme Court.²

Thus a consideration of rural recreation, with its changing emphases, activities, and agencies, has led directly to questions of public welfare and public policy. This in itself is a significant modern trend and leads to other questions of social welfare to be considered in the next chapter.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The topics suggested below may be assigned to individual students or the class may be divided into committees, each assuming responsibility for one topic. The separate committee reports with recommendations may be presented before the whole class, thus becoming the basis for further discussion.

1. A plan for organizing and carrying to completion a dramatic program for rural groups in a county or district.
2. A plan for the public discussion of local and national issues in local organizations.
3. A plan for conducting a county-wide baseball tournament in which rural groups participate.
4. A plan for conducting a town-country community fair.
5. A plan whereby a high school may give leadership and direction to a town-country community, year-around recreation program.
6. A plan for enlisting, encouraging and training rural young people in the arts and crafts by such devices as exhibits, contests, testing aptitudes, or bringing in artists.

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² Owen, J., in *State ex rel. Carter vs. Harper*, 182 Wis. 148, p. 154.

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CHAPTER XXIII

PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND THEIR AGENCIES

TODAY many insecurities threaten the well-being of many rural people. In the social heritage of rural America there is deeply graven the tradition that no one shall suffer distress unaided, but at the same time that no one shall be allowed to depend solely upon others without rendering some service for help received.

Mutual aid among relatives, friends, or neighbors has been the traditional way of meeting personal and family health and social hazards in rural society. It continues to be the accepted way in some areas, although modified in manner to suit changing circumstances. Established agencies such as school, church, and social club have also done their share, as previous chapters have shown. While such services continued during the distress which accompanied the onset of the great depression, there emerged a broad concept known as "social security." From the standpoint of public attention and legislation, it traces back to a report to the President made by the Committee on Economic Security and to the Social Security Act which became law in June, 1935.

The social security idea, as well as the legislation, comprehends a wide field of activity including employment assurance, unemployment insurance, old age pensions and annuities, child welfare, public health, social insurance, and public assistance. It strikes at problems of insecurity, some of which have old and deep roots and some of which stem from more recent difficulties. It is raising issues and causing much discussion because no great scrutiny is necessary to discover that many theories about public health and public welfare are hazy, unrelated to sources of trouble, and even inconsistent with each other. What is the consensus of opinion regarding the responsibility which society should assume for distressed and harassed individuals? Can

agreements be found which will reflect the will of the majority so that there may be a firm basis for social legislation and for effective group action? Can public health and welfare services be devised, financed, and administered without disrupting the integrity and self-dependence of individuals and groups and, in fact, of the established social order? The answers to such questions are not readily apparent.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline briefly some of the current problems, to trace recent trends, and to describe the agencies designed to bring greater social security to rural America. These are aspects of rural life which are not so well or so long organized as some others which have been considered in other chapters. When organization has not kept pace with needs, the first phase of a discussion is some analysis of the situation and some attention to the origins of the difficulties.

INSECURITIES OF OUR DAY

The loss of a reasonable degree of security has meant acute distress and unhappiness to many rural families. Even those not directly affected by recent trends have been far from immune. Uncontrolled epidemics, insanitary conditions, or unabated indigence are public menaces endangering everybody. This increasing interdependence of the various units in modern rural society traced in earlier chapters has particular importance for health and welfare. For example, studies made by the Works Progress Administration have clearly shown how pervasive the loss of self-dependence has been during the last decade. Studies of the Public Health Service and the National Health Inventory have indicated beyond doubt the close association between poverty and sickness.

Merely to list some classes of rural people who are distressed or disadvantaged, such as the poor tenants and croppers of the South, the migratory and seasonal agricultural workers of the West, the many farm families on marginal land, or the unskilled and part-time laborers living in villages, requires considerable space. Such brief array does not explore all insecure

groups, but it does indicate some whose insecurities threaten the security of society itself. Some distressed groups in rural society are hidden from public view; they are scattered over a whole countryside, and they do not form in breadlines as needy urban people often do. Their difficulties are none-the-less real, and to overlook them in an anxiety to see the signs of good times once more is but to re-enact the old illusion of the ostrich with his head buried in the sands.

Rural insecurities not new. Lest the impression be gained that insecurity is something recent, it is well to glance back for a moment to the history of rural society. From the days of the Pilgrim founders, there have been real rural hazards to threaten the well-being of all. Plagues were not unknown. Starvation in some communities followed such crises as the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. There have been periods of depression many times before. The records of public dependency in rural Massachusetts, for example, extending over three centuries, show that there was no year in which local communities were without relief cases. There were the widows, the orphans, and those families which were "on the town."

While previous distress periods witnessed poverty and dependency, the recent widespread depression resulted in an unprecedented loss of self-support to families, both rural and urban. Other eras have had their insecurities, described in other terms, but in our day we are confronted with more intense maladjustments than heretofore. The shock has reached to practically every major social institution and to every type of human activity. The question may well be asked as to why this is so. In part, it is because two "ways out" employed in the past by rural people, especially farm people, can no longer be used with success by some or to a sufficient extent by others. First, as was stated earlier, the frontier is gone. The social significance of this fact is not always perceived. It means that old farmers cannot make a new start in the West when the old farm in the East, Middle West, or South fails. It means that young farmers cannot find good farms easily available, or if they can, the price is beyond their limited resources. Farmers

from the drought areas, who have recently sought another chance in the West, have found the struggle too severe, as the novel *Grapes of Wrath* so effectively reveals. Second, the city is no longer an attractive avenue of escape. Once, ambitious farm and village youth sought their fortunes in the city. Many, not all, found them there. But what opportunities are there for rural youth today? Every city has its own hordes of unemployed. New jobs are not opening at the same rate as youth are attaining maturity, even if places could be found for those adults presently unemployed. In brief, most rural people must face their insecurities in their own communities and find solutions there. Frontiers and escapes are no longer without — they are within.

THE QUEST FOR SELF-DEPENDENCE

Since 1930 many rural families have been forced to turn to direct public relief to secure the bare necessities of life. It does not follow, however, that only those on relief were in dire straits. The mores of rural life, as suggested earlier, made rural people reluctant to seek public assistance even when their scale of living fell far below the standards regarded by them and their neighbors as "socially desirable." Many disadvantaged families struggled on, hoping against hope that the depression would lift, allowing them to get back to "normalcy." Other depressions they had heard about or had experienced had done so. This faith, however, on the part of rural people in the restorative powers of "natural laws" is open to question, as is also the idea that rural citizens will not accommodate themselves to receiving public help. The effects of federal relief and social security aids and of A.A.A. benefit payments do not seem to point in that direction.

Rural families on relief. The quest for self-dependence in rural society may seem to have a discouraging outlook as the facts regarding the extent of relief are presented. However, roads to recovery cannot be well planned without full knowledge of conditions. The depression years, 1931 through 1937,

which Dr. Woofter has called the "seven lean years," found three and a half million rural families — one in four — dependent on relief at some time. There were four million urban families in similar plight. At the pit of the depression in 1935, about two and a half million rural families — more than ten million persons — were dependent on some form of relief.¹

Costs of rural relief reached three and a half billion dollars. The total national relief bill over the seven-year period, paid by both public and private agencies, was thirteen billion dollars. The rural costs were proportionately less because of the smaller number of cases and the smaller grants to rural than to urban families. However, rural amounts do not include many special loans and benefits for agriculture intended to keep farm families off relief or to reduce the needs of those compelled to apply for public aid. These figures of the numbers of families are bewildering, and the costs in terms of dollars are staggering, yet they cannot be considered a measure of the human waste, suffering, and discouragement involved. Millions of rural people were caught in the sweep of the depression through no fault of their own. They could not possibly free themselves without help. Furthermore, some of the misery in rural society did not originate in the recent depression but traces far back to destructive forces at work in rural life for many years. These forces have been discussed in Part III. Finally, distressing rural conditions are closely interrelated with the whole nation-wide situation.²

"Rural," however, is a broad classification, and statistical "totals" often obscure significant differences within the whole.

¹ The analysis for the first part of the chapter follows closely two summary sources: Woofter, T. J., Jr., and Winston, Ellen, *Seven Lean Years* (University of North Carolina Press, 1937), and Vance, Rupert B., *Rural Relief and Recovery* (Social Problems Pamphlet no. 3, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1939). Sources for these summaries include research monographs by the Works Progress Administration, other federal agencies such as the Social Security Board, the Department of Agriculture, and agricultural experiment stations. Reference will be made to some in footnotes and at the close of the chapter.

² For greater detail regarding rural areas, Wynne, Waller, Jr., *Five Years of Rural Relief* (Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1938), Mangus, A. R., *Changing Aspects of Rural Relief* (Research Monograph 14, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1938).

First, not all rural poverty is linked with agriculture. By census definition, rural population includes those in the open country and in villages with less than 2500 people. More than half of the rural relief cases live in villages or are non-farm families living in the open country. Some villages are built around mining, lumbering, or fishing; therefore, their difficulties are linked with industrial causes. Others are service centers for farming regions, and their problems are the results of agricultural distress. Second, there are wide differences in the various regions of the country, and some areas have come to be known as "problem areas" or as chronic "sore spots." Third, there are groups of families or individuals scattered throughout rural society who have fallen victim to circumstances and who had to seek public assistance — youth, the aged, blind, disabled, the ill, or those otherwise disadvantaged.

Farmers on relief. It seems almost a contradiction of terms to write of farmers on relief; they are the ones who supply others with food. But as the depression spread wider and cut deeper, farmers sought relief offices for help in feeding their own families.¹ They were farm owners, part-time farmers, share croppers, and other tenants and laborers.

Farm owners were best able to maintain their self-dependence. Even when the largest number of rural people were on relief, only one farm owner out of every seventeen was on a relief roll. The numbers receiving aid were lowest in the corn belt and in the hay and dairy area, and highest — one in five — in the Lake States cut-over area. When the farm families on relief were compared with neighbors not on relief, some sources of their difficulties became evident. They were larger families, with three or four children and sometimes another relative; they had smaller farms, sometimes less than a third of the average acreage; and they had less livestock and equipment. Some were part-time farmers who had lost their supplementary

¹ Asch, Berta, and Mangus, A. R., *Farmers on Relief*. Research Monograph 8, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1937; McCormick, T. C., *Comparative Study of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households*. Research Monograph 2, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1935.

employment, and some, as a result of heavy indebtedness, had lost all.

Farmers without land fared less well than the owners. One out of seven tenants was on relief in 1935, and it is considered probable that one fourth have been given public assistance at some time. They were like the owners who experienced trouble, except they were involved to a greater extent. Their land was poor, holdings small, livestock limited, and debts many. Compared with tenants who did keep their self-dependence, they were distinguished by their lack of education. Those with less than a grade-school education found it very difficult, if not impossible, to live unaided through those lean years.

One share tenant in twelve was on relief during the worst of the troublesome times. There would have been a larger proportion except for the attention given them through rehabilitation loans. The insecurity of this group of families was greatest in the areas where share tenancy itself was greatest, but also where many families were living at very low levels before the depression began. Nearly half the share croppers on relief were without work of any kind. The relief stipends which they received were very low indeed, usually about nine dollars per month. Attempts to live at that level gave little hope for security or for self-dependence. A major problem of long standing lodges here.

Farm labor families were easy prey to the depression. It is difficult to determine how many were on relief, but the numbers were high — at least 150,000 in June, 1935, and probably 275,000 the winter before. The heads of these families, and of share-cropping families, were the youngest of the group being considered, and like the share croppers they moved about a great deal. They had no experience in other kinds of work; they had little, if any, savings. In three months after losing their jobs they were on relief. The tenants could hold out for seven months, the farm owners for thirteen, after losing their farms.

The catastrophe partially revealed by such figures could not

have descended with such violence even in seven years. Many of the securities, such as they were before 1931, proved exceedingly fragile. The facts were there in the records of the United States Department of Agriculture, but the increasing human risks seem to have passed all but unnoticed. Now attention is sharply called to the fact that even in 1929, considered a prosperous year, 1,700,000 farm families, 7,700,000 persons, lived on farms which yielded a gross farm income of less than \$600 annually; nearly a million farms, 15 per cent of the total, yielded less than \$400; and nearly 3,000,000, almost 50 per cent, had gross incomes of less than \$1000.¹ When there are added to these families those farm laborers and tenants with low incomes, migratory families who move each year, and another half million families on land so poor that the starvation wolf can hardly be kept from the door of the shack in which they live — then you have a total which agricultural leaders estimate as one third of all farm families — “Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture” — trying to live at levels so low as to make security for the nation and self-dependence for the families a fiction.²

Villagers on relief. The second one half — or nearly half — of the heads of rural families reported on general relief in February, 1935, had non-agricultural occupations or lived without an occupation in villages. This group of families underwent their own kinds of vicissitudes. Those centers dependent upon the fortunes of agriculture felt the collapse of agriculture's prosperity first. Retail trade fell away, credit limits were broken, workers were unemployed, and business places closed. When 133 of the 140 agricultural villages restudied in 1936 were grouped into four classes on the basis of their relief loads, it was found that high relief loads were associated with decrease in per capita retail sales in three groups, but not in the highest relief group. This highest fourth had the lowest per

¹ Bean, Louis H., and Chew, Arthur P., *Economic Trends Affecting Agriculture*. United States Department of Agriculture, 1933.

² Taylor, Carl C., Wheeler, Helen W., and Kirkpatrick, E. L., *Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture*. Social Research Report no. 7, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, 1938.

capita sales even in 1929; the following three or four years seemed merely to intensify their previous problems. Leaders in many of these small communities, although definitely critical of relief as such, admitted that relief grants had actually supported the village.¹

Those families relying on incomes derived from mining, textiles, or lumbering were among those which were hit especially hard. Some centers became the "stranded" industrial towns as the result of closing the factory or depleting commercial resources. A study of industrial workers in Massachusetts showed that this group was forced to seek relief in greater proportions than any other occupational group, even including the farmers. It was likewise found that industries replacing those closed were all too often exploitive schemes which brought no lasting jobs or permanent income to the towns. Part-time farmers found their income insufficient to carry them through the period when the mills were closed.²

Thus, by the winter of 1934-35 a million rural non-farm families were on relief. In June, 1935, one out of every eight village families, exclusive of the non-agricultural families living in the open country, was receiving public assistance. Not all villages, however, suffered alike. In the last month studied, relief in some villages was 87 times as great as in others.

Analysis of the reasons given by villagers for seeking relief shows, from another angle, the picture of the village as that in-between group described in the chapter on villages. They became involved in problems of both industry and agriculture. Loss of employment and loss of assets were the prevailing reasons given for distress in villages in every section of the country. Over one half the village workers with any work history, who were on relief from July through October, 1935, had lost their jobs in private industry. This was a period when there was supposed to have been business recovery. Two fifths of the

¹ Brunner, Edmund de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.

² Useem, John, *A Study of Social Security in the Rural Communities of Massachusetts*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1939.

villagers on relief were unskilled workers, one fourth reported some agricultural experience, one fifth were skilled or semi-skilled workers. There were few "white-collar" workers on village relief rolls.

A situation peculiar to villages was revealed by the large proportion — seventeen per cent — of relief households with women as economic heads or living alone. About eight per cent of the relief cases were men living alone. Aged people were also numerous, and many families had no person who was employable or considered capable of holding a job.

Plans for rather fundamental readjustments are needed for the many small industrial and agricultural centers if any measure of security is to be found for American villagers. Readjustments will involve not only internal rearrangements but questions of occupational outlook and volume of business necessary to render worth-while services to agricultural communities.

Six problem areas. When the rural counties with highest relief loads are plotted on a map of the United States, they form patterns which have come to be known as "problem areas." They are regions of chronic trouble where poverty has become relatively "secure."¹

The Appalachian-Ozark area has been cultivated for generations. It was a problem area years before the depression began. Forests had been cut, mines abandoned, and hillsides gullied by erosion. The land cannot possibly supply adequate living for the present farm population, which is increasing rapidly because of high birth rates. This population is nearly all native-white. Since fertility of the land is gone and cultural isolation is great because of poor roads, the level of family and community living is very low when measured by accepted standards of medical care, housing, diet, or mortality.

The eastern and western cotton areas are regions where the fertility of the soil has likewise been depleted by persistent

¹ Beck, P. G., and Forster, M. C., *Six Rural Problem Areas: Relief, Resources, Rehabilitation*. Research Monograph 1, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1935.

cultivation of a single crop. Expensive commercial fertilizers must be applied in ever-increasing amounts if life is to go on. Traditionally and geographically, the eastern and western areas are different. In the former, relief rolls are crowded with both whites and Negroes, while Mexicans add to the burden of the latter.

The Lake States cut-over area, like the Appalachian-Ozark area, lost its lumbering and mining resources. A stranded population was left, but later other families moved in to join the stranded ones. Neither group of families, however, was able to get far beyond a subsistence basis because of small farms, poor land and a short growing season. When income from industry went out, relief came in.

The northern and southern Great Plains areas were the last two to be added to the "problem" area map. They were forced on by the droughts of 1934 and 1936. Droughts have been a constant danger here since the pioneers pushed beyond the irregular twenty-inch annual rainfall line extending from Texas to the Dakotas.¹ The two areas taken together include nearly one tenth of the land area of the nation. Government subsidies to farmers have gone into these two areas for the entire seven years, and the assistance continues. A recent report of a study of the twenty counties in that southern area known as the "Dust Bowl" recommends that 52 per cent of the area be turned back to Nature. Just how Mother Nature is to succor such a prodigal is not suggested.

The first three areas included 40 per cent of the rural relief cases of the whole country in October, 1933. It was found, however, that only 46 per cent of the families on relief were usually farm operators and only 55 per cent, including the tenants, were usually engaged in agriculture. It was significant that one fifth of the heads of all households receiving relief in these problem areas were judged incapable of permanent self-dependence. A major reason was age — 14 per cent, on the average, being over 65 years. In the Old South, where 29

¹ Kifer, R. S., and Stewart, H. L., *Farming Hazards in the Drought Areas*. Research Monograph 16, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1938.

per cent were considered incapable of self-support, the proportion over 65 years of age rose to 20 per cent. This predominance was due to aged Negroes. With the breaking-down of the "furnishing" system, old-age relief for Negroes became a major problem.

Rehabilitation plans for these areas must depend, at least to some extent, upon self-help and self-direction; therefore, education assumes a major rôle in the problem. In the Old South, for example, one half of the Negro and one fourth of the white heads of households on relief reported no schooling. In the western cotton area 25 per cent of the Negro and 10 per cent of the white heads of families had no schooling, while 60 per cent of the Negro and 35 per cent of the white had not gone beyond the fifth grade.

Other areas have distress as intense as in the six problem areas but not as widespread.

Special groups in trouble. Cutting across the various classes of families and types of areas, and scattered throughout rural society, are special groups of people who have turned to the government for help. Mention can be made of only a few of them.¹

First are the two groups at either end of the age pyramid — children and youth on the one end, and the aged on the other. Rural youth and their difficulties have been considered in a separate chapter.² In rural relief families whose only dependents were *children* under 16 years of age, the proportion of families which had three children or more increased from 43.8 per cent in New England to 52.2 per cent in the Appalachian-Ozark area and to 55.9 per cent in the spring wheat area. White families on relief had fewer dependent children than Negro families in both the eastern and western cotton areas. In these areas over one half of the Negro families and about 46 per cent of the white families had three dependent children

¹ Zimmerman, Carle C., and Whetten, Nathan L., *Rural Families on Relief*. Research Monograph 17, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1938.

² Melvin, Bruce L., *Rural Youth on Relief*. Research Monograph 11, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1937.

or more. This suggests that the separation of many Negro households resulted in placing a disproportionately large number of families with children on relief, but likewise that numbers of children are not the only reason for relief among the white families.

Of the rural families on relief which had only *aged* dependents, three out of four had one person, and one out of four had two persons, while practically none had three or more such persons. In the eastern cotton area, 29.9 per cent of the families in the open country had two aged dependents as contrasted with 19.9 per cent of the village families. In the western cotton area, 32.5 per cent of the open-country families had two aged dependents as compared with 21.7 per cent in the villages. The proportion of families with one aged dependent varied from four out of five in the Lake States cut-over and ranching areas to three out of five in the western wheat area.

In general, it may be said that the number of dependents in a family indicates either high birth rate, resulting in large families, or a high degree of family solidarity. For example, a family may cling together and when finally it is forced upon relief a large number of persons are found within a single unit, or, as is shown by the families in the cotton areas, there may be a splitting-up of families with a tendency to place the aged persons on public assistance and to leave the younger employables to work for themselves without responsibility for the others.

One-person households presented special problems to relief administrators. Such households may originate as the result of the breaking up of a family leaving aged persons alone, or because of economic and social conditions. Such families constituted less than 10 per cent of all rural families on relief in June, 1935, except in the eastern cotton, hay and dairy, New England, ranching, and the Lake States cut-over areas. Three times as many one-person families were found among Negroes as among whites in the two cotton areas.

The serious condition of many rural relief families is likewise evidenced by the fact that 12.9 per cent had no worker, and an additional 7.5 per cent had female workers only. The cotton

areas had the highest proportion of families with only female workers. The proportion of all rural relief families having only male workers was 4.5 per cent higher in the open country than in villages, while the proportion of unemployable and potentially *unemployable families* was 6.7 per cent higher in the villages. This is evidence from another source that open-country families are likely to be normal families composed of an employable man, his wife, and their children. Disorganized families tend to concentrate in villages.

It must be evident that the insecurities which trouble rural families are complicated and intertwined. There is no single factor to explain them all. There are good farmers on relatively poor land or with no claim to land. Some farms yield relatively high incomes, but the level of existence of those families who live on them is comparatively low. Ambitious youth and industrious old age have restricted opportunities. To help all those distressed and insecure families and persons who have been described in this section has called forth a multitude of public and private welfare agencies and programs.

A sketch of public welfare in United States. The Elizabethan laws of England formed the basis for most colonial poor-relief policy. In the New England colonies, responsibility for poor relief was assumed by the towns. The Southern colonies used the county as their administrative unit, while the Middle colonies combined the two systems with some responsibility placed upon counties and some upon towns or other local units. The colonial systems were carried on almost unchanged by the state governments after the revolution.

Specialized care of dependents, defectives, and delinquents developed very slowly during the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth. Classification of dependent persons did not come about to any extent until after 1900. Since that time there has been much improvement in provisions for all groups requiring care, including institutional care. Until relatively recently, however, the only legislation for the public care of needy individuals other than children and war veterans was contained in the state poor laws, and they had undergone

very little change since the colonial days. "Outdoor" or non-institutional care under the poor laws was not provided to any extent before the last third of the nineteenth century. Those who did receive poor relief were usually designated "paupers," and in some states were deprived even of privileges of citizenship. Eventually, of course, there was an increased acceptance of social responsibility, and state legislatures provided for certain classes of needy persons such as dependent and neglected children or orphans, mothers with dependent children, the blind, or the aged. Aid to dependent children in their own homes was still a later development. The first statute providing for this was not enacted until 1911, but by 1920 the majority of the states had passed some kind of mothers' aid or widows' pension. The enactment of the Federal Social Security Act in 1935 required considerable revision in these state statutes.

The Federal Government in the latter part of 1932 began to lend funds to state and local government units for the relief of the unemployed. By May, 1933, a Federal Emergency Relief Administration was set up and authorized to allocate funds to the states for emergency unemployment relief purposes. This was discontinued in December, 1935, when the works program provided for in the Federal Emergency Relief Appropriation Act was inaugurated to furnish employment to those needy and employable. From its beginning in 1931, unemployment relief tended to overshadow poor relief in this general field of public assistance, while the need for a longer-time program was recognized in 1935.

Prior to 1933, the responsibility for the administration and financing of relief or other forms of public assistance was most frequently placed upon local units of government. Since 1935, however, the prevailing practice has changed until at present the majority of states have laws which provide for state responsibility and direct administration or supervision by a single state agency. By January, 1939, very few states did not have legislation which provided for all types of relief and public assistance.¹

¹ Lowe, Robert C., *State Public Welfare Legislation*. Research Monograph 20, Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1939.

Emergency agencies. Perhaps some conception of the wide variety and complexity of emergency programs can be gained from the chart (Fig. 44) which shows the trend of public assistance and the earnings of persons employed under federal works programs in the United States from January, 1933, to May, 1939. In the latter month, as an example, earnings of persons employed on works projects operated by the Works Progress Administration amounted to \$140,700,000 and payments to general relief cases \$39,100,000. Together these two types of aid account for nearly 60 per cent of all public assistance in that month. Payments to recipients of old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, and aid to the blind totaled \$46,200,000, comprising 15 per cent of the total. Earnings of persons employed on other federal work were \$45,700,000, nearly 15 per cent of the total. Earnings of persons enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps were \$20,400,000, or about 7 per cent of the total. The National Youth Administration's account was \$6,700,000, slightly more than 2 per cent of the whole. Emergency subsistence payments certified by the Farm Security Administration were \$1,700,000, which was only six tenths per cent of the total payment for the month.

Comments concerning all the emergency programs cannot be given. Two, however, are singled out for brief statement.

Social Security. The Social Security Act became law in June, 1935. It cannot be considered as one particular kind of public assistance; it is rather a measure designed to cope with many types of insecurity. The rural areas of the country were not equally provided for within the program. In the provisions for old-age annuities and unemployment insurance, agricultural workers are not included although rural industrial workers are. The two insurance plans cannot be regarded as relief measures since benefits are received, as in private insurance, on the basis of years in the program and contributions made. There is no test of need. The two plans are administered by different units of government, old-age annuities by a federal agency, and unemployment insurance by a state agency.

Of direct benefit to rural people are those forms of assistance

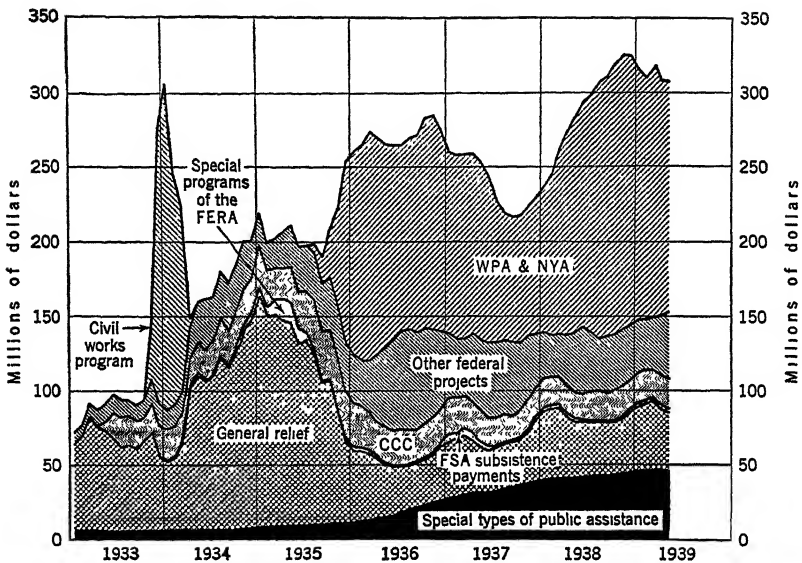


FIG. 44. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND EARNINGS OF PERSONS UNDER FEDERAL WORKS PROGRAMS IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES, JANUARY, 1933, TO MAY, 1939

Source: *Social Security Bulletin*, vol. 2, no. 7, July, 1939. Social Security Board, Washington, D C.

known as the "categorical aids": old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, and aid to the blind. Unlike the insurance plans which call for flat payments, these grants are based on needs of the persons concerned. Many hard-pressed rural communities lacking local funds have been greatly aided by these provisions. Under its clauses, the federal, state, and local governments pool their resources to provide the needed funds. In all three types of assistance the Federal Government matches the money given by the states. In the case of old-age and blind assistance, the federal share is fifty per cent, and beginning in 1940, the aid to dependent children will be fifty per cent up to \$18 for the first child and \$12 for each additional child.

Also of special significance to rural society are the federal grants and aids to states for the strengthening and expansion of their public service programs in the fields of maternal and child health, for crippled children, for dependent and neglected children, and for public health as a whole.

For the establishment and promotion of public health, the Federal Government agrees to contribute annually a total of \$8,000,000. For vocational rehabilitation of the physically disabled, to aid in their return to productive employment, during the year 1939-40, the Federal Government appropriated \$3,530,000 to the states, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii.

These sums seem very large but they are considered investments in people, and it is likely that future years will witness not smaller but larger appropriations in such public welfare activities. Changes in the program will be required; present agencies will modify practices as the result of experience, and more effective ways of preventing difficulties before they arrive will need to be discovered.

Farm security. Specialized relief measures for farmers began rather early. Rehabilitation loans were granted instead of direct relief or unemployment relief. This accounts for the low percentage in the May, 1939, budget described above. Three factors were depended upon to enable this form of rehabilitation program to expand: first, the spreading of risk over many borrowers; second, careful selection of borrowers or clients; and, third, close supervision, not only of the farm operation, but of the family and its household management. It has been possible thus far to relocate or to rehabilitate only a relatively small proportion of needy farmers.

In 1937, after several hundred thousand had been removed from the relief rolls by such rehabilitation loans, the proportion of farm families receiving different kinds of public assistance exclusive of the Farm Security loans were as follows: Works Progress Administration, 40 per cent; Farm Security direct grants — not loans — 6 per cent; aid to the aged, to the blind, and to dependent children, 39 per cent; and state and local direct relief, 15 per cent.

Rural social work. Before the World War there was little organized social work in rural counties. Poor relief was carried on for the most part as temporary assistance to keep families out of dire need. During the war the American Red Cross carried on home service work for the families of men who were

away. The Red Cross was able to introduce and build up standards of social work in many rural communities which had lacked them entirely before. As the depression came on, it was necessary to organize county or town relief administrations throughout the whole country. It was likewise necessary to devise methods of contacting families. Many counties at first employed local workers with no professional training. Later came an increasing recognition of the importance of good practice by trained social workers to give families adequate care. Scholarships in schools of social work have been obtained and inexperienced workers given an opportunity to carry out and adapt those urban practices of proven worth to rural society.

It is possible that one of the important outcomes of the depression period may be a new conception on the part of rural people and their local welfare officials about the objectives of welfare work through good family case work. They may come to understand the importance of helping those families who sought aid during the depression to become independent and self-reliant again. This emphasis upon the rehabilitation of the family rather than on passing out groceries and fuel for temporary subsistence is basic to public welfare in rural life.

Federal reorganization: from temporary to permanent departments. The major trend at present is toward co-ordination and integration of the various emergency agencies which have sprung up in recent years. The reorganization is designed to bring them into regular federal administrations and to give them unified long-term programs. They are now grouped under three main functions: *Security, Works, and Loans*. Those services involving farm people, such as Farm Security and other types of loans, and the Rural Electrification Administration, are incorporated within the Department of Agriculture. The local implications of this reorganization have not become fully apparent. However, the county or other local unit is rapidly becoming the basis of public welfare activity, and prevention of disabilities or rehabilitation, the goals sought.

THE QUEST FOR HEALTH

The story of public health in rural society parallels in many respects that of public welfare. It is a longer story since systematic efforts over large areas and organized agencies began earlier than some of those in the field of welfare. Promotion of sanitation and control of disease through public measures such as immunization and quarantine had to justify themselves in early rural society. Public health nurses had to win their way in country communities just as professionally trained social workers are now having to do.

Similarly, rural programs to preserve health and to care for the ill lag behind those in urban centers. Rural leaders have boasted, and with justification, of the natural advantages of living in the country — fresh air, sunshine, and access to food supply. They have pointed to lower death rates in the country than in the city, to longer life expectancy, and to the smaller chance of contracting diseases spread by personal contact. Recently, however, a reverse trend in death rates seems to be under way. Dr. Lumsden of the United States Public Health Service has pointed out that in the first twenty-five years of the century the death rate in the entire registration area (states in which vital statistics are kept) fell, but that the decline was greater for cities than for the country.¹ It was 4.7 per thousand population for places of 10,000 and over, and only 3 for rural areas.

Of equal or even greater significance is a similar reversal of trend between 1923 and 1930 in infant mortality rates (deaths under one year of age per one thousand live births) when urban and rural are compared. It is clear from this comparison that death rates of infants in 1929 and 1930 were higher for rural than for urban areas, a condition not true of the earlier years of the century. Local studies and state reports confirm this tendency.

Arguments can be advanced, of course, that rural migrations

¹ Lumsden, L. L., "The Physical Status of Rural Youth," *Rural America*, March, 1927.

worked in favor of the cities, but authorities seem to agree that the reduction in general urban death rates, as well as in infant mortality rates, is traceable to organized efforts to improve sanitary conditions and to the building up of public health services. Natural advantages are no longer sufficient to keep rural society in the van of a better health movement. In a period when life must be given greater social security in local communities, a real task faces rural society. It is important, therefore, to examine at close range some of the problems which are inherent to this phase of rural society, and then to observe the agencies which are attempting to cope with them.

Nature of diseases and defects found in rural areas. A general view of the health situation in rural society as measured by mortality and morbidity or sickness rates can be gained from the reports of the Bureau of Census. Comparisons of rural with urban conditions may serve to call attention to special rural problems. It should be borne in mind when such comparisons are made that census vital statistics include as rural the open country and all incorporated places up to 10,000 population.

Consider first infant mortality. Census reports show that for all causes the rural rate is higher than the city, 62 compared with 60 per one thousand live births. Differences for the separate causes, however, are not large. The rural rate exceeds the urban by more than one point for influenza, pneumonia, diarrhea and enteritis, and for diseases of unknown origin. It is evident that better public health programs, wider use of medical services, and more facilities for child and maternal care are needed in rural society.

Rural and urban areas can also be compared for certain specific types of diseases fatal to both children and adults. Four types are higher for rural than for urban areas. The first, and the one in which the differences are really significant, includes the epidemic, endemic, and infectious diseases. According to health authorities, the higher rates reflect insanitary conditions in many rural areas, and the failure to observe quarantine and other health regulations. A higher old-age or senility rate is accounted for by the presence of a larger number of

old people in the rural population. The difference in the diseases of the nervous system is not great but is difficult to explain.

When the epidemic, endemic, and infectious diseases are examined separately, it is fairly clear that many rural health problems are definitely traceable to poor sanitation and to neglect of preventive and regulatory measures. Since, as was explained, the rural rates include places up to 10,000, it is evident that villages and small towns, as well as the open country, have problems of sanitation involving food protection, water supply, and sewage disposal. The rural rates which are higher than the urban are typhoid and paratyphoid fever, malaria, measles, whooping cough, influenza, dysentery, and tuberculosis of the respiratory system. Similar tendencies are found by local and state studies as, for example, those of Cortland County, New York, and Ross County, Ohio.¹

Defects in children, especially those classed as remedial defects, are another index of rural health conditions. Conclusions drawn from studies and observations point to the fact that much more work is needed in diagnosing properly and remedying such defects in children. If these two things can be done, little permanent difficulty may be experienced; but if conditions are allowed to remain as they are, rural children will be seriously handicapped. Studies show higher percentages for rural than for urban children in such types of defects as spinal curvature, breathing, ear, glands, eye, adenoids, tonsils, teeth, and complications associated with malnutrition.² Some of the studies represent conditions as they existed a number of years ago, but more recent surveys confirm the trend, although the types of defects may differ. The problem of diagnosis and cor-

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *A Survey of Sickness in Rural Areas in Cortland County, New York*. Memoir 112, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, New York, 1938.

Lively, C. E., and Beck, P. G., *The Rural Health Facilities of Ross County, Ohio*. Bulletin 412, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, 1927.

² Wood, Thomas D., Dr., New York State Department of Health. Conclusion based on studies of 500,000 school children in 1918; also studies reported by Sorokin, Zimmerman, and Galpin, *Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology*, vol. III. University of Minnesota Press, 1930.

rection of defects in children is most important for the rural life of the future. An agency which can be of great help is the local public health service.

Reclassification by residence changes rural rates. Some states are reclassifying mortality and morbidity rates according to residence of the deceased instead of place of death, with significant results.¹ For example, the mortality rates for Wisconsin for 1932 and 1933 show that while the recorded general urban death rates are higher than the rural rates, the reverse is generally true when the deaths are allocated according to residence. The corrected urban rate for 1932 was 9.4 per 1000 population, the rural, 10.7; for 1933 the corrected urban rate was 9.2, the rural, 10.1. Of more interest are the revised figures for the various causes of death. The allocation by residence increased the urban rate for tuberculosis by over 13 per cent and reduced the rural by 10 per cent, thereby reducing the rural 9 per 100,000 below the urban rate. The fact that tuberculosis sanatoria are usually located in rural areas accounts for this reduction.

For many other causes of death, such as maternal mortality, cancer, automobile accidents, typhoid fever, influenza, diarrhea and enteritis, rural rates were increased by the redistribution. The allocation of maternal death to place of residence increased the rural rate over 13 per cent — a situation probably due to insufficient knowledge among rural women of prenatal and post-natal care. In such diseases as typhoid, diarrhea, and enteritis, the cities have an advantage in safer water and milk supplies, better knowledge of infant care, and greater control of disease carriers.

Costs of medical care. A nation-wide study of the costs of medical care sums up its comparisons of rural and urban differences by saying that the smaller communities and rural areas have a greater concentration of cost in a few families than do the urban centers. "In the largest cities, 39 per cent of the

¹ Hutchcroft, L. W., *The Truth about Rural and Urban Death Rates*. Wisconsin State Board of Health Bulletin, vol. 5, no. 19, 1934.

Dorn, Harold F., *Differential Rural-Urban Mortality in Ohio, 1930*. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1933.

families have charges of \$100 and more and incur 77 per cent of the total charges for all families in these communities; in middle-sized cities 32 per cent have these high charges and incur 70 per cent of the total obligations; and in the smallest places the 20 per cent with these charges account for 65 per cent. As between the largest and the smallest places, the percentage of families with charges in excess of \$100 declines approximately 50 per cent; but the percentage of the charges they incur declines only 17 per cent. Thus, the burden of charges is proportionally greater in the small than in the large communities for those families whose medical burdens are large.”¹

In depression years. It may seem strange to some unfamiliar with technical studies in the field of public health that the effects of the recent depression upon general health are not more fully known.² Many special studies have been made with respect to the incidence of special diseases, to malnutrition among children, to changes in morbidity or sickness rates, and to uses and costs of medical care in certain areas. One example can be cited from a study of a number of farm families who were able to maintain their self-dependence, not accepting relief, but who were compelled to do without health services because of lack of funds. In three Wisconsin localities it was found that farm family expenditures for health purposes in 1933 had decreased from 35 to 50 per cent since 1929.³

Sufficient time may not have elapsed since the depression to reveal general effects upon health. The conclusion is drawn, however, by those who have given it careful consideration that a close association exists between economic situation and sickness. “Conditions of poverty seem to produce ill health, and illness that incapacitates a worker often forces him below the poverty level.” Some scientific opinion holds that poverty

¹ Falk, I. S., Rorem, C. R., and Ring, M. D., *The Costs of Medical Care*. Publication of the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, no. 27, Chicago, 1933.

² Collins, Selwyn D., and Tibbitts, Clark, *Research Memorandum on Social Aspects of Health in the Depression*. Bulletin 36, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1937.

³ Kirkpatrick, E. L., Tough, Rosalind, and Cowles, May L., *How Farm Families Meet the Emergency*. Research Bulletin 126, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, January, 1935.

gives rise to sickness more frequently than sickness gives rise to poverty.¹ Whichever is true, both are great sources of insecurity and unhappiness.

The trend toward county health units. The organized public health movement in rural America has made real progress as measured by the number of county or comparable district health units. Although there is no standardized organization, the average unit has a health officer, a sanitary inspector, one or more nurses, and a bacteriologist, all under the direction of a trained physician. Organization, of course, is not the only consideration; administration and trained personnel are fully as important. To improve sanitary conditions, it is necessary to have inspections; to detect diseases and their effects at their incipient stages, frequent health examinations are needed; and to secure co-operation from people themselves, continuous health education is essential.

The county or similar administrative unit in many rural areas seems to be proving its worth in these phases of public health. Such units increased rapidly, from 10 in 1915 to 268 in 1925, and to 573 in 1931, at which time about one fifth of the counties were organized and about one fifth of the people were served.² This trend was arrested in the next years, for the number of counties so organized declined to 519 by 1933, but because of the provisions in the Social Security Act, federal grants for the service were increased until it is claimed that in 1939 there were nearly 1000 county public health units.

A description of one county health unit and its recently expanded program of work may serve as an illustration of what can be accomplished. It is a southern agricultural village, whose rural community area covers most of a county. Local, state and federal appropriations made possible a budget of \$7000 for a full-time doctor and a nurse. A sanitary inspector was added the second year, and in the third year, 1935,

¹ Perrot, G. St. J., and Sydenstricker, E., "Causes and Selective Factors in Sickness," *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 40, no. 6, May, 1935.

² Ferrell, John A., and Mead, Pauline A., *History of County Health Organizations in United States, 1908-1933*. Public Health Bulletin 222, United States Public Health Service, Washington, D.C., March, 1936.

a second nurse was employed. The doctor and nurses reach each open-country school at least once a year. Clinics are held and water supplies examined. The weekly paper carries regularly a front-page article on health by the doctor. The local undertaker complains of a sharply lowered death rate, as well he may. The incidence of typhoid, for example, has been cut 90 per cent in two years.¹

In addition to regular county plans, state and federal relief agencies placed many public health nurses, as well as many dollars of funds, in counties to care for the needs of their clients. Dieticians and home economists were employed by the Agricultural Extension Service and by the Farm Security Administration. The Red Cross gave increased services toward improvement in nutrition. Clinics for medical and dental services were made available by the Works Progress Administration. Under the Social Security Act, special provisions for maternal nursing service in rural areas were made.²

Reversal of trend in number of physicians in rural areas. Prior to 1930, the farm and the medical press, as well as reports of technical studies, were all calling attention to the decline in the number of rural doctors. In 1924, the General Education Board published a report of conditions between 1906 and 1923, which showed a steady decline in the proportion of physicians to population in all rural and small city areas (places of less than 25,000 population). The restudy of the 140 agricultural village communities showed that the decrease had continued to 1930.

Similar conclusions were reached by the close analysis made in four states (New York, South Carolina, Iowa, and Washington). It was found that the rural population between 1920 and 1930 had increased 5.3 per cent, but the number of doctors declined 20.9 per cent in the villages and 28.3 per cent in the hamlets and the open country. The decline for all the rural territory was about 22 per cent. Even in the states of New York and Washington, where the growth of the rural population

¹ Brunner, Edmund de S., and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1937.

² Eliot, Martha M., "Progress in Maternal and Child Welfare Under the Social Security Act," *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 26, no. 12, December, 1936.

exceeded 10 per cent, the number of physicians declined by nearly 17 per cent. Naturally, therefore, the number of persons to each physician increased. If the population living in the open country and in all places of less than 10,000 were considered, the number of persons to each physician so located was 1014 in 1920 and 1368 in 1930. It was pointed out that the number of persons to each physician was higher in a more recently settled state like Washington, and in a state like South Carolina with its many Negroes.

The rate of decline of physicians in the 140 villages and their communities was 15.8 per cent between 1920 and 1930, a rate lower than that found in the four states. The actual loss was even greater, since under the 1930 census certain non-medical practitioners, such as osteopaths, chiropractors, and others, were included as physicians, whereas in 1920 they were not. There was apparently no way of correcting for this change in enumeration.

Not only were there fewer doctors in rural areas in 1930 than in 1920, but the doctors who remained were older than city physicians and older, on the average, than in 1920. In the four states, the average age was progressively lower as the population of the center increased. In New York, for example, doctors in the country and in small villages averaged ten years older, and those in medium and large villages more than eight years older than the physicians in cities of over 100,000. In Iowa the differences were from four to ten years, and in Washington, from two to six years. In the other states, for most types of communities, the average age of physicians increased, but the rural increase was always greater than the urban.

Since 1930 there are evidences of a reversal of trends. The Dean of the College of Medicine of Syracuse, New York, who has been studying the location of graduates of the medical colleges for the past twenty years reports a movement of young graduates to rural areas. He finds about 25 per cent of the 1930 graduates now located in communities of less than 5000 as compared with 18 per cent of the 1925 graduates so located in 1931. It may be reasonable to suppose that recent graduates, finding

less practice among the unemployed in the cities, have tried to establish themselves among a rural clientèle. In Michigan the 1910-20 trend of physicians moving into the city of Detroit was reversed some time between 1920 and 1930 but seemed to reach a high point in the period 1929-31. In this study, contrary to usual calculations, the rural population was distributed evenly among all villages and cities, and thereby a higher ratio of physicians was found for places under 2500 than for the larger communities.*

In the restudy of agricultural village communities, an increase of 7 per cent was found in the number of physicians between 1930 and 1936. The distribution of the doctors varied somewhat according to the size of the villages, but even in the smaller ones the number held at least to the 1930 levels.

More dentists in rural areas. Dentists have not followed the same trends as doctors. The number in villages for which special census tabulations were secured, remained practically constant between 1920 and 1930. To be sure, about one seventh of the villages had no dentists, but most of such places had less than a thousand population. Between 1930 and 1936 the number of dentists in the 140 agricultural villages increased about 10 per cent, although the gain was unevenly distributed among the four geographical regions. They were also younger than the physicians by nearly a decade, averaging about 44 years at both census periods.

There are several possible explanations for the different proportions of dentists and physicians in agricultural villages. The general public has been taught in the last decades to take better care of teeth than formerly, thus bringing increased patronage to the village dentist. On the other hand, the physician has suffered because rural people have used urban medical facilities more and more. Moreover, the average dentist needs neither the years of training nor the elaborate laboratory equipment that have become necessary for the best medical work.

More hospitals for rural areas. Although detailed figures are

* Sinai, Nathan, *Report of the Committee on Medical Services and Health Agencies*. Michigan State Medical Society, Lansing, 1933.

not available with reference to recent trends in the distribution of hospitals in rural areas, there is general evidence that rural communities have shared with urban communities in the increased number of buildings, improvements, and clinics. For example, the records of the Works Progress Administration indicate that as of September, 1936, there were about 400 such projects under way, with estimated expenditures of more than \$4,000,000. In the agricultural villages, the increase in the number of hospitals came prior to 1930. The numbers were double those found in 1924. The larger the community, the greater the likelihood that it would have a hospital. To be sure, in some of the smaller villages these institutions were little more than a few beds in a doctor's home, used for emergency cases. County-seat hospitals were more likely to approach modern standards, although many of them fell woefully below the standards achieved in the rural demonstration hospitals assisted by the Commonwealth Fund.

The provision of adequate hospital services for rural areas is a problem, however, with which leaders need to continue to grapple. There are many aspects to the situation. First, there seems to have been little planning for the location and the service areas of hospitals. In one state, for example, a study revealed that in nine counties there were over 1000 people for every available hospital bed, while in nine other counties there were only 250 people for every bed.² Furthermore, over 80 per cent of the hospitals were definitely private in ownership and in their service policies. They might belong to a doctor, nurse, railroad company, society, church, school, or corporation. Some were really not hospitals at all, but remodeled residences operated by a doctor or a nurse or a local citizen. Second, there are many different kinds of hospitals — tubercular sanatoria, county hospitals, institutions for the insane, children's hospitals, convalescent homes, church hospitals, and so on. It has been difficult, therefore, to formulate and carry out plans for hospitals in rural areas, especially when the density of popula-

² Kolb, J. H., *Service Institutions for Town and Country*. Research Bulletin 66, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, December, 1925.

tion and wealth is so low that to secure a sufficient volume of business very wide areas must be included. This difficulty also renders any degree of specialization difficult or impossible in some counties or even in whole states.

The depression raised many problems for hospitals. Receipts declined and the need for free treatment and care increased. Reduced family income made it impossible for many patients to pay for adequate care while decreased hospital revenue from such patients and from voluntary contributions reduced the amount of free care that many hospitals could give. As a result, there is an increased demand for government hospital care and an increase in the amount of out-patient services. It is reported that some local proprietary hospitals have been reorganized into non-profit institutions in order to remain in service.

Finally, there seems to be little agreement regarding what constitutes "adequate" hospital service in rural territory. Some authorities, such as the American Hospital Association, the Catholic Hospital Association, and the American Medical Association, seem to agree that a general hospital, to render dependable service, must have at least thirty beds. To fall below that minimum means difficulties such as excessive overhead and inability to attract competent physicians and nurses. There is no agreement about what rural population unit per bed should be the basis for planning. Some urban standards call for one bed for each 200 or 300 people. If this standard were applied to rural territory, it would take a community of from 6000 to 9000 people to support a hospital. Obviously, not every community can have a general hospital, not to mention specialized hospital service.

Dr. Davis, Chairman of the Committee on Research in Medical Economics, suggests that five beds per thousand population is too high a rate except for large urban areas. Two beds per thousand, or three at the most, are all that should be estimated for small towns and rural sections, he claims. Such unit requirements would, of course, substantially reduce the per capita costs but would increase the area of service necessary to maintain the minimum size unit.

It is evident that if younger and more thoroughly trained physicians are to be drawn to and retained in rural areas, they must have modern laboratories, hospitals, equipment, and the services of good nurses. As the chapter on "Community Organization and Local Government" will point out, it is sometimes possible to accomplish this by means of establishing clinics and diagnostic centers in smaller local communities, and then associating them with larger centers or even with counties which can meet the minimum requirements for a good hospital and a staff at least partially specialized. Then, if the channels of service can be opened to state laboratories and to hospitals with highly specialized medical and surgical staffs, the hope of better service for rural areas will be more fully realized.

Trends and experiments. As a result of all the recent health movements and the new service programs, there seems to be a definitely increased concern in public health as a means for bringing about greater social security in rural society. The extent to which the improvement becomes permanent will depend upon the relationships which can be effected between the rural people themselves and their professional leaders.

Experiments in co-operative associations for the employment of physicians and the maintenance of hospitals or clinics may be an evidence of such quickened interest. One of the most interesting of these plans in strictly rural areas is that carried on by the clients of the Farm Security Administration. In North and South Dakota, for example, farm clients are paying fixed annual fees which provide for medical, dental, surgical, hospital, and nursing services on a co-operative basis. The plan was started in 1937, and it is proposed soon to include non-client farm families as well.¹ Similar plans are in operation or under consideration in some of the provinces of Canada.²

¹ Collins and Tibbitts, *Research Memorandum on Social Aspects of Health in the Depression*. Bulletin 36, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1937.

² Medical Relief Administration, *The Experience in Essex County, Ontario, Windsor, The Essex County Medical Economic Research*, 1937.

A Plan of Health Insurance for British Columbia, Victoria, B.C., Department of the Provincial Secretary, 1935.

Rorem, Rufus, *The "Municipal Doctor" System in Rural Saskatchewan*, University of Chicago Press, 1931.

Plans and recommendations for socialized medicine and health insurance are also found in the report of the Committee on the Cost of Medical Care.^{*} This report called forth sharp retort, however, from the conservative wing of the medical profession, speaking through the American Medical Association, and finally a minority report became necessary. Not all professional leaders can see eye to eye on the solution of some health problems; for example, diphtheria injections were opposed at first by a majority of doctors. Again, some of the members of the profession did not lend their support to the securing of safe milk for children; the minority persisted, however, until they finally became the majority in sponsoring these health policies.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

Much remains to be done in both rural health and rural welfare. Public health measures appear to be well on their way in some rural areas but they are in great need of strengthening in others. Public welfare as an attack on the basic problems of rural destitution has just begun.

The recent period reviewed rapidly in this chapter was characterized by a tone of emergency and a tempo of urgency. Difficulties seemed very great and the time very short. Some problems were new; others were old ones in aggravated form.

The idea of social security gave a broader base and a longer time perspective to public measures. Now, as attempts are made to scan the future, other points of emphasis emerge. It must be recognized that insecurities and social problems will always be found. Even in so-called "good times" there are sure to be those who through misfortune or mismanagement will need help and guidance. The character of a society can be judged by its reactions to such social problems.

Contemporary social security seeks to achieve or regain healthy development and self-dependency for the individual.

^{*} *Medical Care for the American People*. The final report of the cost of medical care, 1932

But if an individual suffers a handicap beyond his power to overcome, then the community should assist him. An emphasis upon greater social responsibility appears at this point. Following this thought, it becomes evident that the center of activity for the state or society, whether it be the caring for the disabled, or the aiding of the dependent, or even the handling of the delinquent, hinges upon this matter of the handicap. The handicap may be physical or it may be mental; it may be social or it may be economic, but if it actually exists, society has no choice but to help to correct it. If this view is accepted as a guide to thinking and acting, it will be quickly realized that real strategy for health or for welfare programs is in the direction of prevention, striking at causes before difficulties arise, rather than merely attempting to remedy a problem already existing. This is an emphasis upon conserving and building human resources.

Several corollaries may follow from such an emphasis: *

- (1) Early discovery and diagnosis of remedial defects or social handicaps of an individual, especially of a child, followed by prompt and adequate treatment or training, may save him as a valuable member of society.
- (2) Difficulties can best be prevented and combated at their source in the local community.
- (3) Prevention and treatment require that every agency and resource, public or private, be utilized and co-ordinated.
- (4) Only skilled and informed personnel can deal with the myriad and perplexing problems of health and welfare.
- (5) Well-organized team work between professionally trained and citizen leaders is necessary — citizen boards to determine policies, professional staffs to execute and administer them.
- (6) The family should be considered the basic unit for social treatment, and if it becomes necessary to remove a member for special care, a course of treatment should

* Adapted from Recommendations of Citizens Committee on Public Welfare, Madison, 1937.

be designed to permit an early return to the home. The family itself may have to be rehabilitated.

- (7) The county, group of counties, or similar unit should be considered the area for local administration. It should be of such population and wealth as to make possible good administration and equitable distribution of costs.
- (8) State and federal departments should assume such responsibilities as are consistent with local laws and traditions, to insure minimum standards and to equalize the vast inequalities for persons living in different areas.
- (9) Brick and mortar institutions should be places of last resort, and, even there, treatment should be adapted to individual needs and toward restoring the individual to a useful place in society.

Progress in the direction of such goals cannot be measured at this time. Some indication of trends, however, is apparent. For example, in child health and welfare the report of the last White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, as well as plans now under way for the one to be held in 1940 on Children in a Democracy, leaves no doubt that the rural phases of future work are as important to the welfare of all society as the urban.

At the federal level, recommendations of the Interdepartmental Committee, "organized to co-ordinate health and welfare activity of the federal government," and presented to the National Health Conference in July, 1938, are apparently incorporated in a bill "to provide for the general welfare by enabling the several states to make more adequate provision for public health, prevention and control of disease, maternal and child health services, construction and maintenance of needed hospitals and health centers, care of the sick, disability insurance, and training of personnel; to amend the Social Security Act; and for other purposes."¹ This bill was introduced in the Senate in the last session by Senator Wagner, read twice, and referred to the Committee on Education and Labor. It did not become a

¹ Senate Document 1620, Seventy-Sixth Congress, February 27, 1939.

law, but is expected to form the basis for proposed legislation in the next regular session of Congress. Twenty-two objections to the bill have been recorded by the American Medical Association.¹

From many independent sources comes the opinion that some rural people are losing their determination for self-dependence and are increasingly looking to "government," which they seem to feel lies somewhere beyond them or outside their direct experience and control. Therefore, it is important to emphasize local administration, and community action carefully coupled with state and federal efforts. This trend in thought leads directly to the subject of the next chapter.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Select one official and one private agency (local, county, state, or national) working with rural health problems, and find out as much as you can about them. Do the same for one official and one private agency working with rural social welfare problems. Visit headquarters, or local offices where possible, or secure literature by mail.
2. Organize this information in brief outline form and be prepared to present it to the class. Give particular attention to the following points:
 - a. The real purpose of agency
 - b. Its local forms of organization
 - c. How it serves rural communities
 - d. How you think such service could be improved

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PART V

RURAL SOCIETY: ITS TRENDS AND POLICIES

CHAPTER XXIV

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

FINAL considerations in a study of rural society are the significant trends which raise issues and call for policies. Many trends and policies in rural life today extend all the way from local community to nation. Never in the history of this country was the local rural community so much a part of the national life, and never was the social and economic welfare of rural society so much involved in policies of government. The A.A.A., with its local committees and its contracts with individual farmers, and Social Security, with its county administration, are among the ways whereby closer national-local relations have developed. Many issues of far-reaching character have been raised. The local community, its organization, and its relation to local government are points from which to begin a discussion of these issues. The present chapter will therefore consider local problems, and since state and national policies are immediately involved, the last chapter will attempt to follow them to their conclusions.

RURAL SOCIAL TRENDS, IMPORTANT FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tracing of social trends is one way to disclose the forces and processes which are at work in a society, as well as to bring to light questions for future policy. Policies, however, may turn quite as much upon objectives or goals which a community or a state sets for itself as they do upon current trends. Goals involve attitudes and values which reach into backgrounds and traditions as well as forward toward ideals. No policy or ideal such as democracy can be achieved nationally unless it can be

achieved in the local communities of the nation. Therefore, in a period of transition such as the present, when changes are rapid, when values are wrested from traditional moorings and ideals waver, the task of community leaders and citizens is challenging, indeed. What are some of the issues in modern rural society?

Equality of opportunity for rural youth. Democracy's promise of equality of opportunity has peculiar implications for rural youth today. Earlier chapters have shown that a high proportion of youth and children in the population is one of the distinguishing characteristics of rural society; nevertheless, in matters of child welfare, health and education, rural communities are at a disadvantage, as national authorities have pointed out again and again. Cities compelled to face large problems and to plan broadly have extensive resources for administration and are in much better position to develop and maintain standards than rural communities. A little over one half the child population of the nation lives in small towns, villages, and rural districts. In view of the great inequality of wealth, equality of opportunity in the matter of education is largely fiction. This inequality prevails not only between rural and urban societies but among the states. As stated in Chapter XVII the wealth per child is four times as large in the eight most wealthy states as in the eight poorest. There may be a great deal of romanticizing about the natural advantages of rural life for children and youth, but in terms of social resources, rural communities are actually underprivileged.

Two other trends add to the complexity of the situation. First, emergency times have forced many rural youth into difficult circumstances. Some are compelled to leave home, others to return home, and in the great ebb and flow from country to city and back again, many of them have been dammed up in the small towns and villages with no certainty of employment and no resources for returning to school.

Second, there is the tendency for more children to be found on farms removed from city centers. Yet, as shown in previous chapters, those outlying rural communities could not until re-

cently expect to grow by reason of their larger families; theirs was the task of serving as the nation's seed-bed. Growth has been a function of migration. Have the state and nation any responsibilities for these communities? When birth rates were correlated with per capita retail sales used as an index of wealth, the results indicated that the wealthier a community, the lower its birth rate. In other words, children are negatively related to wealth; that is, the more children, the less wealth. How is this greater fecundity of rural society to be preserved? Will this sector finally succumb to the same forces operating in or near the more urban centers? In the meantime who shall carry the burden of education and increased health risks? To what extent and over how wide an area shall the equalization principle be recognized and how shall it be applied? Surely these are issues involving the local rural community in county, state, and national policies.

Locality giving way to special interests in neighborhood preservation. A second trend is that persistence of country neighborhoods is associated more largely with special interests than it is with locality. Rural society is becoming less dependent upon locality and organic relationships and is freer to employ voluntary and contractual forms. Voluntary organizations, of course, are not new to farmers. The three general farm organizations which have a more or less national membership are the National Grange, organized in 1866; the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, in 1902; and the Farm Bureau, in 1909. Of late, there is an increasing tendency for these and for other smaller and less formal groups such as breeders' associations, health societies and social clubs, to specialize their activities and to affiliate with those of like kind to form county-wide and state or even national associations. Such perpendicular organizations of like-minded groups soon seek special forms of control and privilege through political or mass action. They find many reasons for expansion and for receiving public sanction. Similar movements and pressure groups have been common to urban society for a long time.

The question arises as to whether this tendency to form spe-

cial groups will divide rural society into as many parts as there are interests. The results of such a trend from the standpoint of local government can be found in certain sections of the country where special *ad hoc* districts have been created for the administration of health, education, mosquito abatement, drainage, public relief, and what-not.

With more statesmanlike leadership and better social planning, can these specialized movements be made less sharp and divisive, and can they be directed more assiduously to those matters of common rather than special concern? Obviously, this cannot be done on a neighborhood scale. Many things can be promoted within and between neighborhoods, but policies for integration and co-ordination of educational, health, recreational, and welfare programs call for plans which must be projected on a larger community-wide basis with the co-operation of county, state or national units. If the latter policy can prevail, a real degree of local integrity can be achieved and more socialized relations created between town and country. Such a unity of effort has very real implications for local government itself, as well as for community organization.

Specialization leads to perpendicular organization of rural society. The trend toward the specialization and segregation of voluntary groups and organizations in rural society is but a forerunner of a more serious but similar tendency on the part of formalized and institutionalized agencies. It makes very little difference where one begins or what set of agencies one chooses. The tendency can be illustrated by the accompanying chart, in which Dr. Small's six elementary interests are used.¹ Institutions and agencies are bearing down upon rural society with a great deal of independence of action and with much pressure from the top down, "the top" being state, regional, or national headquarters. This trend toward centralized control for many agencies has already been pointed out in earlier chapters.

The loops drawn crosswise in the diagram suggest the necessity for some linkage or integration at various levels. The

¹ Small, A. W., *General Sociology*, p. 198. University of Chicago Press, 1905.

three cross-loops suggested are at the family, the community, and the county level. If the picture were to be completed, it would probably be necessary to introduce a personality and a state loop. However, the concern here is more largely with local organization policies. In discussions of the increasing importance attached to group relationships in a modern and changing society, individual and state interests receive much attention. To be sure, the reconciliation of the demands and impulses of personality with the requirements of a complex society is important; yet it is to be remembered that much of life is lived in an area which is the domain neither of the individual nor the state. As a matter of fact, some of the most important and socializing experiences occur between these two spheres.

The importance of the rural family and the problems centering around its children have been detailed elsewhere. The point at issue here is, Can the rural community with courage and foresight forge a link which will bind into a unity of action those agency arrows which are bearing down upon it? Traditionally, the rural community had elements of individualism and of competitive independence. Under modern conditions it has an opportunity to work out another way of living. It might even be argued that collective action is necessary as a

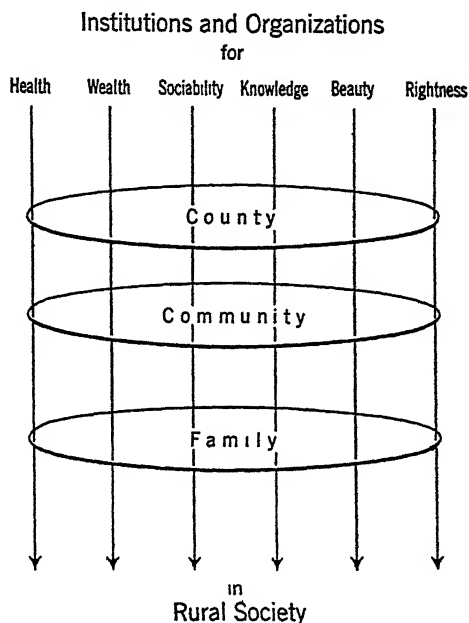


FIG. 45. CHART SUGGESTING PERPENDICULAR TYPE OF ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN RURAL SOCIETY

means of self-defense, lest independent institutions disrupt local life. From a more constructive standpoint, however, the opportunity is present for a greater awareness of local needs and for co-ordinated efforts to meet them. To accomplish this, as Sanderson says, a desire for unified action is imperative.¹ The promotion of the common welfare can be made the goal of the community only as it becomes more self-conscious and gradually assumes self-direction. Means for accomplishing this as well as principles involved will be discussed later in the chapter.

The county link binding the institutional arrows into a sheaf brings one directly to a consideration of the trends in local government and to the question of what place the county can legitimately hope to play in public policies and in voluntary forms of control.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

One of the trends of the past ten years is the increased assumption of various social responsibilities by different administrative units of government, as in matters of education, health, social welfare, recreation, and service to youth. Questions of elections, protection of life and property, administration of justice, or the assessment, levy, and collection of taxes are not to be considered here, important as they are. Rather we shall consider those aspects which have direct social implication for the rural community.²

Local government changed little in past, but questions arise regarding its future. Local government has changed less than any of the institutions with which our discussion of rural society has been concerned. There have, of course, been changes in the methods by which local units perform their services and in the relations which such local units bear to the state and

¹ Sanderson, Dwight, *The Rural Community*, p. 559. Ginn & Co., 1932.

² The argument for this section is dependent upon the analysis made for *Rural Social Trends*, chap. xi.

nation. In the time of neighborhood living, many local government units such as townships, parishes, villages, and even counties, were necessarily small and locally controlled. More recently the demand has risen for government to take on an increasing number of social functions. Sometimes this is done by having local units and officials assume larger responsibilities and sometimes by the creation of separate administrations for such tasks as fire protection, library service, irrigation, or public utilities. A locality was found in the East which had eleven different elections each year, some on the township basis, some on the special district basis. The others were primary and general elections.

It is becoming generally recognized that systems of local government need reorganization for their increasing load of duties and because of the many social and economic changes which have taken place: shifts in population characteristics and distribution, increased interdependence of country, village, and city, and a greater emphasis placed upon public education, health, and welfare. Therefore, local units of government no longer conform to the social and economic groups in rural society, if indeed they ever did in some of the Middle-Western States. The civil boundaries of the town, for example, were laid out on quite artificial and arbitrary township lines. The New England town idea may have been in the minds of the pioneering planners, but their engineers set up their transits and laid off the township lines uniformly six miles square. The lines often cut across physical barriers and they were no respecters of the natural groupings of people. A citizen might cast his ballot at a town hall with one group of people and be associated in his educational, religious, and recreational activities with quite another. Certainly this is one reason for the impotency of local government in many rural areas.

During the past few years discussions and studies have turned toward improvement and reorganization of local government. The belief is apparently growing, and with a good deal of strength, that the tens of thousands of local units are a factor in the mounting tax burden described in Chapter XIV and in

the increasing difficulties and problems of local government. Evidence of this rising tide of dissatisfaction is to be found in discussions at meetings of such organizations as the American Country Life Association, Institute of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, and taxpayers' leagues.

The Governor's Commission of New York for the study of New York and the bill passed in that state for recodification of the century-old town law are examples of reorganization movements. There have been many investigations, some private, others official or quasi-official, of government in rural areas and in such states as New Jersey, Mississippi, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Carolina.² The National Municipal League, the American Public Health Association, and other national organizations have become increasingly interested in local government reform.

Discussion has passed on into action in a number of states. Reorganization seems to be taking two general forms. First is the tendency toward consolidation of existing units or the formation of larger units adjusted to expanded needs. This inevitably involves the abolition of certain local units, especially townships and local districts. Second is the tendency for certain functions and services to pass from local units to county, state, or even to federal control. This involves questions of administration, finance, personnel, and even of constitutional changes. Social considerations need their due share of attention, for it must be emphasized that principles for the reorganization of local government will have to be anchored to heavier arguments than the immediate interests of administrative efficiency and financial economy, important as these are.

Tendencies toward centralization and consolidation. The question of centralized control versus local control, or "home rule" as it is often called, has been debated with much fervor. It has gone even to the highest courts of the land. Originally the state legislature had complete power over counties,

² The Organization, Functions, and Expenditures of Local Government of New Jersey by the New Jersey Commission to Investigate Municipal and County Taxation (1932). Survey of the Organization and Administration of State and County Government in Mississippi, by Research Committee of the State of Mississippi (1932).

but the question of local control was raised again and again until the Supreme Court of the United States, only a few decades ago, ruled that "the state made it [the county] and could, in its discretion, unmake it."¹

In spite of all this, people continually insist upon their right to circumscribe state and federal rule in their own localities. They fear betrayal of local interests by central authority. Rural people fear domination by urban interests. Constitutions, therefore, are filled with clauses and amendments preventing most states from modifying local functions and units of government unless constitutional limitations are first removed. Centralized tendencies on the part of states have been checked at many points by city home rule legislation. Villages have incorporated and set themselves off from the town government so that they may do as they choose within their boundaries, and in some states they have done so for the specific purpose of securing direct representation on county boards.

States, however, are steadily assuming more and more control over local functions and agencies. For the most part this is accomplished within the framework of existing governmental organizations in one of two ways: through the direct assumption of local functions and by means of various grants-in-aid or subventures which carry certain supervisory or controlling powers. Local units including counties under the heavy pressure of property taxes, have given way to arguments of economy and efficiency.

Grants-in-aid, already reviewed for the educational functions in Chapter XVII, have been a favorite form of increasing state influence. The granting of subsidies by a central government to local units has long been practiced in the Old World, but in the United States it is only within the past twenty or thirty years that there has been a notable expansion in the amounts, purposes, and contingent provision of such grants. The tendency is of much importance for community organization policies. Consider the schools. Between 1913 and 1929 the amount of

¹ Jones, Howard P., "Constitutional Barriers to the Improvement in County Government," New York, *National Municipal Review*, August, 1932, Supplement.

grants increased more than four times, but the total amount of state revenues and expenditures during the same period increased at about the same rate. Consequently, subsidies for education remained in about the same proportion to total state expenditures.¹ To be sure, since 1930 there has been a great increase in state aids. Nevertheless, many questions regarding equality of educational opportunity for rural youth, raised in the early part of the chapter, remain unanswered. Local communities in many states struggle on as best they can in the face of uncertain state and national policies or in their absence.

Grants for highways come not only from state but from federal sources. Not so for education. While Professor Fairlie estimates only a twofold increase in state expenditures for local highway purposes between 1913 and 1929, in addition to local grants many states have taken over complete responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the whole state system of roads.

Grants from states to localities for public health, social welfare, hospitals, and charitable institutions have been relatively small compared with those for education and highways. Increases in such amounts as well as in control have been greatest since 1890. Professor Fairlie estimates that, from 1913 to 1929, state expenditures for charities doubled, although the proportion of total expenditures for this purpose was smaller in the latter than in the former year. Since that time, of course, all records for state and federal expenditures for relief have been broken, as the previous chapter indicated. State services, such as laboratories, clinics, and the extension of state hospitals for the insane, for charity cases and for specialized attention in order to relieve local institutions, have also increased.

The centralizing tendency with its attendant grants and controls is much less pronounced in such things as fire prevention, recreation, parks and playgrounds, and adult education.

¹ Fairlie, John A., "Subsidies to Local Governments," from the *Proceedings of the Chicago Exploratory Research Conference on the Reorganization of the Areas and Foundation of Local Government*, May, 1932. New York, Social Science Research Council, 1932. See the Chapter on Education and the Schools (XVII) for other figures regarding proportions of state aid.

These are responsibilities still largely within the purview of community and county units, responsibilities often all but unrecognized. Tendencies toward federal supervision and control over state functions could also be traced, but it is the local community and county situation which is the focus of attention.

Place of the village in local government. Villages, except in New England, have had a way of setting themselves up as municipalities and assuming most of the local governmental functions and powers. The background and history of this tendency have been traced in earlier chapters. As Table 70 indicates, the proportion of all places under 2500 population which were incorporated in 1930 was 64 per cent, an increase of 5 points compared with 1920. There are variations from region to region, as the table shows, but in all parts of the country, except New England, where no computations were made, the proportion increased during the ten-year period. In the West North Central States nearly every place of the size indicated is incorporated and the greatest increase took place in the Mountain States.

TABLE 70. RATIO OF INCORPORATED VILLAGES TO ALL VILLAGES

Census Division	1920 per cent	1930 per cent	Census Division	1920 per cent	1930 per cent
United States (except New England).....	59	64	South Atlantic.....	57	62
Middle Atlantic.....	33	38	East South Central....	58	60
East North Central ...	67	72	West South Central....	51	55
West North Central....	89	92	Mountain.....	56	78
			Pacific.....	43	46

Incorporation of such villages as municipalities creates additional problems concerning local government and community organization. Which functions can be carried on successfully in the village and which in the county, township, or community? Services performed by small municipalities, in addition to the more strictly governmental functions connected with taxes, elections, law and order, are education, utilities, public buildings, and improvements. Major health and social welfare functions are assumed by counties and states, as has been shown.

Education, especially at the high-school level, is an exceedingly important service from the standpoint of the more modern rural community, as pointed out before and as will be stressed in the rest of this chapter. Early incorporation of the village in many cases cut it off from country territory and from township government. Country pupils enter the village high school, but the service area is not the governing area unless legal consolidation has taken place. Furthermore, within the village itself administration of educational affairs is separated from other local municipal functions. Both conditions create first-rate problems with which county and community must cope if educational opportunity and responsibility are to be equalized.

Maintenance of public utilities is a second function of village municipalities, although the restudy of the 140 agricultural villages in 1930 showed a tendency for local plants to be sold to larger private utility companies. This was contrary to tendencies found in some of the near-by cities, but problems of management and finance in the smaller villages were apparently making it easier for private companies to buy up local systems. In these villages about one third of the outstanding indebtedness was for the utilities; one third for streets, and the remaining one third for schools and general items.

The village at best is a very small unit, indeed, to undertake many major functions. Even in prosperous times it is sure to find itself in more and more incongruous positions because its incorporated area in no wise corresponds to its service areas. Under such circumstances, it cannot secure full financial support from country areas for its schools, unless legal districts are extended. Districts or townships are charged tuition, but country people have no voice in school policies. It cannot make full co-operative arrangements with its tributary country constituencies for such enterprises as libraries, swimming pools, fire protection, or community buildings. Privileges of participation can, of course, be extended with or without cost, but this hardly makes for real community solidarity.

Separate administration of educational and other governmental affairs. It is important to call attention to a situation which

has arisen in this country respecting the separation of school administration from other local government functions. Two educational authorities have recently traced this condition to its New England origins.¹ They say that, although control of school was first in the hands of the town meeting and later of the selectmen, ultimately special committees were created to control the schools. It was argued that education is different in character from other community enterprises. These authorities suggest that the American people have always felt that the services rendered by the schools are intimate and personal in character, and that they cannot and should not be controlled in the same ways as other public functions.

What happened in New England has been repeated in the later history of most American communities. Boards of education have been recognized by state law as corporations distinct from local government. Legislatures have granted special charters to city districts and in some cases the Board of Education has been given independent taxing powers. Rightly or wrongly, intolerable complications have recently arisen in many localities. Compromises have been worked out between school boards and local governments, but the evils of overlapping taxing authority have not been eradicated. School people are said to favor a separation as complete as possible from municipal government, and in so doing they claim to be in agreement with the general attitudes of the American people. However that may be, complications continue to confuse local government and community organization. In villages particularly, such confusion arises as a result of the fact that administrative boards are often not the same for the grade school as for the high school. Legal areas may not correspond in either case with the incorporated area of the village, and much less with the area from which pupils are actually drawn.

Likewise the county is divided into numerous small and independent school districts. In New York State, for example, there were at one time ten thousand common-school districts.

¹ G. A. Works and Charles Judd, Discussion in the *Proceedings of the Chicago Exploratory Research Conference in the Reorganization of the Areas and Functions of Local Government*, May, 1932. New York, Social Science Research Council, 1932.

The recent Regents' Inquiry into the character and cost of public education in the State of New York reports the weakest link in its educational system is the local district and recommends a centralized unit organized on a community basis.

The county the administrative unit. A case has been deliberately built for suggesting that the county should serve as the administrative, and the community as the working, unit for certain types of services needed in modern rural society. Whether this shall be made the prevailing pattern rests ultimately upon rural leaders and upon rural people themselves. Services and functions are concentrated at the county level. The growth of county health units, the work of county agricultural and home demonstration agents, under both state and federal grants, the movement toward county administration of education, the urge for county library services, the increase of county parks and recreation places, and the accumulation of social welfare functions on a county basis all point in this direction.

The number and variety of these agencies have been expanding until one finds two counties, one in New York State and one in California, which have 13 and 14 agencies, respectively, organized on a county basis.

A New York County

- ** Health Unit
- ** Farm Bureau and Agricultural Agent
- ** Home Bureau and Home Agent
- ** Junior work with 4-H Clubs
 - * Council of Religious Education
 - Red Cross
 - * Boy Scouts
 - * Girl Scouts
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - W.C.T.U.
- ** Library
- Grange
- * Dairymen's League
- Co-operative Marketing Associations

A California County

- ** Health Unit
- ** Farm Bureau and Agricultural Agent
- ** Home Bureau and Home Agent
- ** Junior work with 4-H Clubs
 - Sunday-School Association
 - * Welfare League
 - * Y.M.C.A.
 - * Boy Scouts
 - * Chamber of Commerce
 - Federation of Women's Clubs
 - Parent-Teacher Association
 - * Co-operative Marketing Associations
- ** Library

* With paid personnel

** Tax supported and paid personnel

Recent experience in the administration of such service as public relief and social welfare is likewise giving the county greater prominence. For example, a Federal Government publication on social welfare states quite flatly that "the county

has been generally accepted as a more practical local administrative unit than the individual town or township.”¹ To be sure, this is the conviction or ideal of a professional worker, not shared by all leaders, nor yet by most rural people, but it is evidence of a trend in administration. The report adds that by the beginning of 1932 only about one third of the states had developed a county welfare program, but the number was growing. National agencies, such as the Social Security Board, have made uniform county, town, or district plans prerequisite to their financial participation. These and other pressures toward county administration of social functions are definitely being felt.

Counties themselves, however, are often laid out along arbitrary lines with little or no regard for the services to be performed or for the groups to be served. Since some are small in area, wealth, and population, a movement for county consolidation has developed. Some consolidations have taken place in about twenty states, while plans and proposals of a state-wide character are under way in seventeen others according to reports of the National Municipal League. Inability of poor counties to support needed institutions and services makes some kind of reorganization necessary. It is difficult to redraw or to wipe out county lines because of political and traditional loyalties, but it appears that much can be done to combine functions, consolidate institutions, and eventually to bring together the counties themselves.

Details of county-wide administration for rural services cannot be given here, but a list under five general functions is suggested. They appear to be more and more dependent for promotion and administration upon the county or similar local unit.

- (1) Education — youth and adult, vocational and cultural, library service.
- (2) Agriculture — service to farm, home, and youth, zoning for land use.
- (3) Health — physical and mental, remedial and preventive.
- (4) Welfare — social security, assistance, child welfare, corrections.
- (5) Political — elections, tax levy and collection, protection and justice.

¹ Colby, Mary Ruth, *The County as an Administrative Unit for Social Work*, United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Publication 224. 1933.

It is doubtful whether counties unable to perform at least a majority of such functions should be considered as worthy of permanent county status.

The community the working unit. The community idea is posited on the theory that rural people can and wish to join together locally, to determine their common weal. Field workers in rural communities reported that local people insist that some form of local organization is necessary. They argue that the county is too large and the county seat too far away. They want local officials whom they "can know and trust." Many town chairmen and clerks as well as many village officials are familiar to their constituencies and go far beyond narrow legal or semi-legal duties. They are truly "representatives of the people." Unfortunately, not all the declarations of local politicians are sincere. Just as city people turn to their ward leaders for help in untangling difficulties arising out of conflicts in governmental jurisdiction, so rural people turn to their own local officials. This is simply to say what Professor Munro has expressed more emphatically thus: "They [people of educated and propertied classes] have been obsessed with a faith in political mechanics and have been enslaved to the conviction that government is an affair of laws, not of men."²

The administrative unit for many functions may be the county; but there is need for more localized working units. For example, in some states, like California and Ohio, where the county library plan has wide usage, a local branch is often maintained in the high school, not only for the pupils, but for the residents of the larger community. There may be a branch in the village also, but the whole system, both of finance and of personnel, is integrated. Needless duplications, often found among country district schools, or between country schools and village schools, or again between school and village libraries, are avoided.

County health units were also visited in which community groups of interested adults formed the real working unit of the

² Munro, William B., of the California Institute of Technology, quoted from *Information Service*, New York City, October 31, 1931.

organization. Prevention and therapeutic work was all correlated with plans carried out through the schools. Agencies for recreation, child welfare, social service, credit, and fire prevention were found working according to similar arrangements.¹

Church leaders are talking of the "larger parish," the central idea of which they say is "a group ministry over areas as well as churches." They point out that this is really a return to the original English practice where churches are responsible for definite and assigned "parishes." Promotion of the plan in this country is proceeding definitely upon the theory of a town-country community.

A complete governmental unit on the community basis has even been proposed. It could be flexible enough to accommodate different local situations in all of their essential functions, its advocates suggest.² This line of argument leads directly to the question of what is meant by community organization in rural society and what are the principles by which it can be accomplished.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN RURAL SOCIETY

The people of a locality may, by voluntary effort, promote their common welfare. For modern, rural society, it is quite evident, from the discussion in the previous chapters, that the locality which is large enough and strong enough to qualify for comprehensive group organization is the community. It is not sufficient that rural society should be organized by families, societies, interest groups, and social institutions. Rural people also require an organized relation to a locality, to the land area on which they live. The country neighborhood, although persisting as a locality group, is too small, too specialized in interest to serve such a function in the future. The rural community which has been traced in detail in Chapter V becomes the

¹ Adapted from *Rural Social Trends*, p. 296.

² C. J. Galpin and Theo. B. Manny, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, have urged such a consideration. Manny, Theo. B., *The Rural Municipalities*. Century Company, New York, 1930.

modern unit for such rural social organization. Its general interests require a measure of integration and collective action, depending upon the voluntary association of the people.

It must be emphasized that community organization in present-day rural life is almost entirely dependent upon the voluntary and the deliberate effort of leaders and citizens. This is in sharp contrast to the village type of economy, described earlier, characterizing much of the rural life of the Orient, Europe, and New England. As has been shown, the modern rural community is permeated with separate institutions and agencies of many kinds and of many purposes, such as education, religion, recreation, agriculture. Some measure of local organization and co-ordination is needed.

The issue is squarely before rural people today, farmers and villagers alike, as to whether they will organize a community of sufficient size and solidarity to give them the social utilities and institutions they feel they need, and at the same time develop a point of view which will be recognized in larger political, educational, and religious spheres. National and state politics, as well as urban educational and religious interests, have used disorganized rural society too long as a pawn in games in which local rural interests mean little, if anything. If democracy is to be preserved in government as well as in the other great functions of life, local opinion and action must be made more effective. Citizens must assume greater part in public policy.

The argument runs even deeper. Some leaders of social thought raise serious question as to whether a civilization can be built apart from local, primary, or personal groups. Social stability does not develop without it and social control is not effective apart from it, they claim.

There remains the question of why the community is an appropriate area for joint action and group organization. The previous analysis should have made clear that the country neighborhood cannot be such a common-action unit. It has neither the size nor the strength to guarantee those services of education, health, recreation, and social welfare which are required in modern rural life. It may have its own activities, as

has been shown, and they will help it to persist, but it cannot play the larger rôle.

For somewhat the same reasons, the village cannot continue alone and apart. Its population stability, its occupational and industrial changes link it more and more securely to its country hinterland. It is rapidly becoming the organizational and institutional center for rural society. Dr. Galpin, in his classic study of Walworth County, Wisconsin, foresaw this trend. It has been accelerated since his time. The increased proportions of farmer members in town or village schools, churches, social and fraternal organizations, noted in Chapter V, the larger number of joint enterprises of town and country people, the freer mingling of the villager and farmer in social and business activity all show it. The problem is, Can and will social, educational, and business institutions adjust themselves quickly enough to give the needed leadership to the movement? Such institutions as the high school, library, hospital, newspaper, recreational hall or opera house have traditionally and historically been the possession of the town or village. Farmers and their families have used them "by leave" or by permission of the town or village people. Can the transformation be made whereby they may be joint citizens in the larger town-country community?

By their very nature institutions and governments are conservative, anchored to the past, but changes are in the making. Their direction depends upon leadership. What might be termed "social action" often precedes legal sanction. This was especially evident in the consolidation of country school districts, and in the union of country and village territory to form high-school districts. At first, schools would be closed, but districts not dissolved. Transportation and tuition would be "arranged" with the near-by country or village school. Ultimately social practice was made complete by legal vote, but only after opposition and controversy had died away.

This is not an argument for community self-sufficiency, but rather for a degree of specialization in the form of continued dependence upon neighborhood, county, or urban centers for

those services which the community cannot hope to render well. A unique opportunity for leadership in this emerging town-country community is before the high school. Ten years ago retail trade was a ready means of determining town-country areas or boundaries of town influence. Today retail trade is more broken up in its distribution from town center to city center, but the high school rises to a place of significance in the delineation of the area of interdependence of town and country. May it not be that the high school, with its agriculture, home economics, and commercial departments, can become the focal institution for both the youth and the adults of the larger town-country community, even as the district school was in the days of older neighborhood arrangements? Adjustments will be required; but judging by the experiences of many localities, such a community unit can become an area in which a larger measure of co-ordination can be achieved. The story of the Sawston Community in Cambridgeshire, England, is a fine illustration of what can be done.

The case of Sawston Village College in Cambridgeshire, England. It was a matter of great interest and pleasure, though it must be confessed of some envy, to find the community ideal perfected in plan and completed in one unit in Cambridgeshire, England. The plan incidentally was made possible by the help of American capital. It is a regional demonstration of rural reconstruction organized about a local educational center. The area corresponds to the administrative region of the Cambridgeshire County Council, which is the local statutory authority for the administration of the services to be described.

To carry out the scheme it is proposed to establish not less than ten village colleges which will form community centers for every phase of public health and physical training, education, humane and technical, agricultural demonstration, the library movement, juvenile employment and insurance, local government, and social life and recreation. Each village college will be established in a large centrally situated village and will serve an area of about seven square miles, containing not less than six other smaller villages and an average population of from 9000

to 10,000 people. Each village college will contain the following:

- (1) A maternity and infant welfare center which will provide for the needs of the central village and for the tributary villages by means of peripatetic visiting nurses.
- (2) A model nursery school for children in the central village.
- (3) A model open-air infant's and junior school for the children of the central village.
- (4) A post-primary school for the children of all the sections in the district served by the village college.
- (5) A room for the school medical services, and for adult medical advice and health propaganda.
- (6) Rooms for adult education, and for committee meetings of all the various educational and recreative associations of the area.
- (7) A library and reading room.
- (8) A room for agricultural education with charts and specimens.
- (9) A hall to be used by the school in the daytime and in the evening for all kinds of village functions, including a cinema.
- (10) Gardening and fruit demonstration plots.
- (11) A playing field laid out for all games — football, cricket, hockey, tennis, and bowls to provide for the school and for adult recreation.
- (12) Warden's house.

The first village college was built at Sawston, a small village of some fifteen hundred inhabitants, which lies seven miles southeast of Cambridge. It is a center, not only of juvenile and adult education, but of all those many social activities which should go to make up a healthy and progressive rural community. It serves the needs not only of Sawston, but of an area around it of several square miles containing other villages.

Principles for rural community organization. To accomplish a community development of the kind just described requires careful plans. Plans, in turn, must rest upon principles; therefore, three principles for rural community organization in relation to the rest of society and to local government will be presented very briefly.

(1) *Local unit requirements AND an open channel to specialized services.* The principle of local unit requirements simply means

that a community shall determine what is needed in terms of population, money, and area, in order to organize and maintain certain service agencies and social institutions. In agricultural circles it has long been known what volume of business is essential to the efficient operation of a creamery, for example, and what cow population is required to produce that volume as well as how much pasture area and feed are needed to assure the required flow of milk. It is equally if not more essential that rural communities know what institutions and agencies they can maintain, and what requirements must be met in order to make them truly serviceable.¹

A set of such unit requirements was worked out several years ago for three community institutions: high school, library, and hospital. The results of the study are carried in Table 71. No brief is held for these particular figures, especially those following a dollar sign, because costs have changed greatly. Extent of area is also different for different sections of the country, but the table does suggest a method and a principle for community planning.

TABLE 71. SUGGESTED UNIT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE THREE
COMMUNITY SERVICE INSTITUTIONS

Kinds of Institutions	Unit Requirements and Costs per Unit					
	Minimum Service Unit	Total Costs per Service Unit	Population Required	Local Costs per Capita	Service Area in Sq. Miles	Tax Rate on Assessed Valuation of Area for Local Costs
High school..	100 pupils	\$113.00	1,250	\$7.20	41.7	.0037
Library.....	30,000 book cir- culation	.13	4,000	1.00	133.3	.0005
Hospital . .	30 beds	4.00	6,000	2.10	200.0	.0011

Source: Kolb, J. H., *Service Institutions for Town and Country*, Research Bulletin 66, December, 1925, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

For the high school it was generally agreed that 100 pupils were needed as a minimum, although some educators insisted upon 250, in order to have a good working unit. If the number

¹ For a discussion of determining what a community can afford, see Appendix G, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 373.

fell below that, certain teaching and curricular plans could not be carried out without increasing the per pupil costs too greatly. In a sample area of five counties, about 1250 people outside of centers of 3000 or more population were required to maintain a one-hundred-pupil high school. Not all youth of high-school age go to high school, of course, but it was held that a community must work toward that as a goal. The area required to maintain that number of people was 41.7 square miles, just a little larger than the average township. It is recognized that not even a modern social planner can go over a state with a sort of cookie-cutter pattern and block out school districts without regard to topography, nationality, or ability to pay; it was found, nevertheless, that if the ideal suggested had been followed in the five counties studied, high-school service could have been greatly improved. Its costs could have been cut in half, and one hundred per cent of the youth of high-school age could have been in school instead of the less than fifty per cent which was actually enrolled.

For the library it was agreed that the unit of service was not the book on the shelf but the book in circulation. Thirty thousand circulation was made the basis for calculation, and it was determined that about \$4000 at that time would be required to maintain a unit of such size, exclusive of county aid or branch system. The American Library Association was authority for the statement that local support for library service should not exceed one dollar per capita. Therefore, it was deduced that a community of 4000 people, farmers and villagers together, was needed to have a good, independent library unit.

For the hospital unit requirements were also worked out in similar fashion, and a community of 6000 people was found necessary for support. It is, therefore, evident that not every community can have every service institution, and more important, not every community needs them, provided the second part of the principle is observed. "Open channel to specialized services" means that the local community must have and keep an organic connection with larger and more specialized services of county, district, or state. The county may well be the ad-

ministrative unit. This is well illustrated in the case of the hospital. If a county health unit is maintained, surely not every community within it will need a complete hospital; a clinic or a diagnostic center may suffice. Specialized cases can be quickly taken to the county hospital if there is one, or to the near-by city hospital with which the community has worked out co-operative plans in advance. The superintendent of a large state hospital says repeatedly that the limiting factor in the use of the state institution by rural people is not the regulations of that institution, but the closed or inadequate local channels leading to it.

This involves a principle of wide application. George Russell (AE), the great Irish statesman and rural leader, puts down as one of four fundamentals in a rural civilization that local associations must be linked with larger federations so that each locality may become conscious of the larger problems and life of the state and nation.

(2) *Local responsibility with support AND a wider equalization base.* This is but a restatement of the line of thought developed in connection with the community as the working unit and the county as the administrative unit. All that is needed here is a re-emphasis of the conviction that unless local responsibility, backed by willingness and ability to pay, can be maintained, all superstructures of state, county, or federal aids and regulations are sure to crash sooner or later. This is not to minimize the second or "and" portion of the principle. It has been pointed out many times that equality of opportunity requires a larger supporting base than the local community. It may be the county, the state, or the nation. This has been made clear in the case of education, health, recreation, and social welfare.

(3) *Local solidarity with integrity AND larger comity and co-operation.* This principle calls for local group identity, a sense of dignity, and an indigenous rootage in local soil. The future of democracy turns upon it. Personality itself, as has been explained, depends for development upon identification with groups. In a character education inquiry it was determined that correlation between knowledge and conduct is not due to a

fundamental relation existing in the minds of children, but is a group phenomenon, due probably to the relationship between group codes or standards and group conduct.¹

It must also be urged that group organization is not for purposes of limiting or hemming in, but rather of introducing and relating group members to the larger society. Herein lies the opportunity of the rural community if it regards the principles of comity and co-operation. Comity means courtesy between equals. Co-operation means acting jointly. Some community activities must be on the basis of comity, some must follow the principle of co-operation. In religious matters, for example, where church bodies are of widely differing cultural and theological backgrounds, obviously common ground can be gained only by comity. On the other hand, in great enterprises of marketing and buying, where volume of business is essential and large overhead agencies are needed, then the co-operative or joint-action principle must be used. In both relationships the rural community, if well organized, has a vast opportunity. Community means having in common. Communication means making common. Therefore, through principles of comity and co-operation and by means of communication, community life may become a reality.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Describe the general plan of local government which is operative in your state. Indicate the relation of local units to each other.
2. Enumerate the functions which are performed by the local units of government in your state and the officials or boards which are responsible for each.
3. In establishing or maintaining a rural high-school program, what unit requirements such as number of people, size of district and wealth of area, need to be considered. How do these units compare with similar units required for libraries, hospitals, townships, and counties?
4. To the support of what local rural institutions must county, state or nation contribute? On what principles can you justify such support?
5. Describe evidences which you have observed of the break-down of local

¹ Hartshorne, Hugh, and May, Mark A., *Summary of Work of the Character Education Inquiry*. Reprinted from September and October, 1930, issues of *Religious Education*, Religious Education Association, Chicago, Illinois.

units of government, or of efforts (successful or otherwise) to reorganize local functions and units on larger scales.

6. Plans may be worked out for organizing all or part of the class as a county board to consider the needed programs and finances for the year. Committees presenting different phases of work such as health, agriculture, education, recreation, public welfare, and so on, would present their claims. The final adoption of a complete program and budget would rest with the class as a whole or, if organized on the small commission plan, with those members who are appointed to act as commissioners.

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CHAPTER XXV

RURAL SOCIETY AND NATIONAL POLICY

THE objectives set forth in the last chapter in terms of the local community have already been shown to be bound up with state, regional and national trends and programs. It is important therefore in this final chapter to consider the state and especially national issues from the point of view of rural society and to suggest, as far as possible, certain questions that grow out of the conditions and trends disclosed in this book.

SOCIAL PLANNING

Implicit in such a process is the concept of policy-making, or planning. One of the basic laws of physical science, too long overlooked by those who have sought to make the social sciences use the methods of the exact sciences, is that unguided nature moves toward chaos. A farm left alone produces nothing but a wilderness; a business organization, undisciplined, ends in bankruptcy. Society without social controls, laws, customs, mores or policies leads inevitably to anarchy.²

A challenge to social science. The physical scientist in his laboratory manipulates the elements with which he deals in an effort, at last with frequent success, to achieve preconceived ends. The social scientist has usually striven to emulate the precision of the laboratory without concern for his ends. He has believed that his truths would, when given to the world, produce beneficial results. This was the approach of President Hoover's Committee on Recent Social Trends, but Hoover's successor challenged social scientists themselves to act on their findings, to build and execute policy. In so doing, President

² Cf. the addresses of Carl T. Compton before the American Association for the Advancement of Science on June 21, 1934, and of Edmund de S. Brunner before the American Farm Economics Association and the rural section of the American Sociological Society on December 29, 1933.

Roosevelt broadened the function of the expert in modern society, who must not only discover truth, but also guide, plan, and programize. This is a task of very great importance and of supreme difficulty since the human atom, unlike the atom of the physicist's laboratory, reacts to infinitely more impulses, infinitely more complex in their nature.

This is not to say that society has proceeded unplanned up to this time. That would be ridiculous. Rural America has had many plans written into law.

A great national land policy was planned in the post Civil War days and executed with considerable success under the Homestead Law. Amid all the confusion and alarms of civil strife, we planned to bring the benefits of science to agriculture on a national scale, and therefore founded our land grant colleges of agriculture. Under the necessities of a greater conflict, the World War, and under the spell of a century and a half in which each day saw more mouths to feed and backs to clothe than the day before, we redoubled our efforts to produce ever more by planning. We established and expanded our agricultural extension service, and assisted all rural high schools that desired it to have a teacher of agriculture. The extension service plan has been copied by other nations. Confronted by the problem of providing adequate credit for agriculture, we planned and created the Federal Land Bank system which measurably improved the credit conditions of agriculture. What is true in agriculture is true in other branches of our national economy. But we have had scattered and sporadic plans and have not seen that often such plans when combined produced a new dilemma. We have not understood and perhaps still do not understand the difference between plans and a planning program, constantly taking all the changing factors into account.

Social science is not wholly prepared as yet to accept the challenge to guide society more rigorously in the paths of social wisdom. But that attempt must be made inevitably, indeed it is even now being made in the United States. This chapter then is concerned with summarizing some of the more impor-

tant trends in the rural society of the United States that have been discussed — and with a few policies at present projected. The summary will not, however, so much rehearse facts as raise questions and indicate policies. It will ask if population growth and movement can be socially controlled, and if so, how. It will appraise social relationships and attitudes, especially those concerning city and country as interdependent parts of the nation. It will raise the issue of the social uses of land, of the ethics of restricted production, and seek light on rural social problems from the National Resources Board.

The assumption of the chapter is that a somewhat greater measure of social planning is essential and that only through planning and experimentation can a larger measure of social justice be achieved.

POPULATION PROBLEMS AND POLICIES

Consider the enormously complicated problem of population. As indicated in Chapter IX, three great movements of people have characterized our history: that from the east to the west, stimulated for a few decades partly by the Homestead Law; that from country to city, unplanned in every way; and briefly, the recent depression-born flight from the city to the country. Each of these was a great folk movement, millions of people responding *en masse* to similar stimuli.

Until recently we have given little thought to such phenomena. As long as each decade recorded a satisfactory advance in the sum total of our population we cared little where that population lived nor how often its constituent atoms moved about.

But the last two of these movements provoked vital questions. In the cities the homes vacated stood empty and the landlord and tax collector were dismayed. In the country the sudden influx raised problems for schools, social workers, and especially government agricultural officers.

The huge extent of migration in the United States has been shown. If world conditions grow worse or continue to limit

prosperity, or if relief payments are reduced, the balance of migration may again swing toward the country. If little change occurs, the differential in birth rates between city and country will increase the rural share of the total population. If this happens, will farms increase in number, but decrease in size, causing the standard of living to decline? Or will rural America thus regain political dominance, become more self-conscious, and move in unexpected ways toward a more generous distribution of the wealth and income of the nation in ways that will favor rural as against urban dwellers, thus perhaps causing sectional conflict?

If the so-called prosperity of the 1920's returns it is certain that thousands if not millions will again migrate to the cities, in an unguided rush. But eventually we must begin to answer the question of how many farmers we need in order to feed the nation, of how many the city dare drain from the land, and of how it can offer them the security they need.

If on the other hand the present efforts toward recovery fail measurably of their goal, if the mistakes that the world has made since Watt and Adam Smith ushered in the machine age and laissez-faire have yet to take a greater toll from the industrial world, the problems become quite different. Then the few thousands on the newly formed resettlement centers will be but the forerunners of many more. The efforts of the policy-maker will go toward salvaging the best in the old order for the benefit of a society that for a time will be more agrarian, more nearly like that of a new pioneer period, than anything this generation has known.

In the meantime there is much talk of moving people from land that is unable to support them to more productive areas. Little has as yet been done in this respect, but it is well to point out that any considerable procedure of this sort will raise serious questions. Where will these people go? Many are well along in years and know nothing but their own type of farming. They do not now compete severely with commercial agriculture, as has been shown. Their removal may cause real problems for the districts to which they go and may disturb

local political arrangements. If placed on fertile land they may, though less efficient than the average farmer, compete with him. That the population we have at present might be better distributed is doubtless true, but any efforts in that direction raise basic questions of social philosophy and of social objectives, some of which have been or will be indicated.

Can social policy affect the birth rate? But perhaps a question more fundamental than the location of population is that which concerns its rate of growth. In this matter new trends have appeared. The nation which grew by millions with every decade seems likely to cease to grow in 1950 or 1960. The proportion of old people in the total population is already mounting. An increase in the death rate will inevitably follow. A declining population, which is a probability if present trends continue, would mean painful readjustments for industry, real estate, and agriculture. The cities have always been consumers rather than producers of population. They are not reproducing themselves today, and their population deficit is so large that many whole states are not propagating enough children to keep their population stable without immigration from outside. Rural America, while still having and producing a surplus of children, is now sharing in the declining birth rate.

Thousands of rural youth at present unable to become economically self-supporting are awaiting better times and seeking urban opportunities; but if with prosperity an urban migration returns, the declining rural population will be accentuated, and with it the declining market for agricultural as well as for industrial products.

The declining birth rate, like our migrations, is a conscious phenomenon made up of the individual responses of millions of families to the economic conditions they face. Can planning affect such a problem? It is impossible to answer because such planning has never been tried. But there is some ground for believing that greater security might influence the birth rate. It has in already prolific Russia. Nor need such greater security await complete successful economic planning to distribute more equitably the national income. Some steps toward it can

be taken through old-age pensions, maternity benefits, unemployment insurance, better and cheaper housing and other palliative devices. Indeed, in the last two years there has been a slight upward turn in our birth rate.

Population trends and land. But if such steps are not tried, or if for any reason the present trends continue, it means that there is no further need for the development of new lands by irrigation or drainage through reclamation projects. It raises questions as to the wisdom of placing large numbers of unemployed on the land or even of permitting them to establish themselves there by voluntary action. It will, moreover, change ideas as to what constitutes good land. Present marginal soil would become submarginal for a nation whose need for food and fiber was decreasing. Average land would, much of it, drop to the marginal classification. The effects of such a change on trade centers and their social institutions would be considerable, and if allowed to catch us unawares, calamitous.

TRENDS IN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONS

Just as problems of population, whether rural or urban, must be considered from both points of view, indeed in their national scope, so the trends in social relationships and social institutions indicate the growing interdependence of farm, village, and city that has inevitably followed the passing not only of the old frontier but also much of the old isolation that once characterized rural life in the United States.

Widening horizons. This is revealed in a multitude of ways, some obvious and some unexpected: in the great increases in the circulation of urban newspapers in rural districts, which have transformed even small localized city papers, as for instance in Wichita, Kansas, a place of 111,000 population, into metropolitan news organs circulating in regions with a radius of 100 miles or more; in the growing interest of rural people in public affairs and the cultural arts, such as music, drama and literature. It is typified in the increased attention of rural people, especially

women, in current styles of dress, observed by many in village, town and small city, and clear to any who have attended gatherings of farm folk for the last twenty years; in the broadening interests and wider range of subjects treated in the agricultural press and magazines catering to rural women as compared to pre-war days. It is to be detected in the steady increase of local rural organizations affiliated with state and national federations and agencies, comparable perhaps to the steady increase of nationally advertised wares, from canned foods and soap, to gas and ready-to-wear clothes, purchasable in village shops. It is indicated in the programs of local social organizations which reflect increasingly not merely the particular problems of farm people but their enlarging experiences and interests as well, and in the growing demand of rural people for parity with the city in such things as social welfare, health and education.

It is perhaps demonstrated also in the spread of urban business techniques to agriculture, such as the shift from self-sufficient to commercialized farming, from general to specialized crops, in the disavowal of individualism and adoption of corporation sales techniques by many co-operatives, in the very capitalization of land values in farm as in urban real estate, and the consequent rise of the indebtedness on American farms.

Influence of communication. The motive power for these changes comes in part, but only in part, from the automobile, the moving picture and the radio (whose influence may indeed be overrated), the newspapers and magazines, the agricultural extension service, the public schools, lecturers and so on. Many of the things just catalogued are both causes and effects of the growing *rapprochement* of farm, village, and city, brought about by the increasing number and uses of the channels of communication.

Rural and urban co-operation and conflict. It can be claimed that the developments here listed are ephemeral trends in the age-old struggle between city and country for cultural and economic ascendancy, with city at the moment winning. But enduring progress has been made in bringing city and country

together. Changed conditions force social realignments. City and country alike understand each other better; a harmony has come about as a result not only of the migration from farm to city and city to farm, and of the recent inventions like the automobile and the radio, but also through the inexorable movement of world affairs which reveal with unsuspected clarity the interdependence of rural and urban economic health.

Yet rural people are still conscious of their own particular problems and interests. The circulation of the agricultural and rural women's magazines has not declined with the increased subscriptions to urban dailies. The struggles of the recent years have brought group phenomena, temporary and elusive, but strategic and often related to more permanent and significant social groups. They called into being a full complement of leaders, symbols verbalizing issues and of popular "devils" or enemies to be fought. They repeated some of the history of earlier agitations from that of 1786 to the Populist and Non-Partisan League Movements.²

But these phenomena largely ceased when the bounty checks from the A.A.A. began to arrive. The disturbances dramatized the issues and so helped educate the nation as to the rural situation. The surer strategy for a large minority group in a democratic society is to convince the majority that the interests of the whole are best served by justice to the minority; and indeed at present social forces seem to be lending their weight to that approach, an approach which has already been used on the community level. The opposition to and inertia regarding the consolidation of local governmental units, so far as it has reason and not self-interest behind it, is based on the fear of dominance of rural needs by an as yet insufficiently enlightened urban opinion and a staunch faith in the essential value of democracy operating in local affairs. The aroused farmers, east and west alike, who prevented foreclosure sales, stopped the transporta-

² Cf. various articles in *Social Forces* (March, 1934), pp. 369-79. Thus foreclosure sales were actively opposed with the battle-cry, "They Can't Take Our Homes Away!" The Farmer's Holiday Association demanded, as did prior movements, "Cost of production plus a fair living." Their leaders held up for attack "The Interests," "Big Business," or more specifically, "The United States Chamber of Commerce."

tion of food, dumped milk into streams, were striking at the city, or at least at some of the workings of an economic system they believed to be urban in its origins.

Rural America is modifying rather than adopting urban ways. The town-country community is clearly going to supersede the old isolated rural neighborhood. The village, not the crossroads, is the present capital of rural America. And who knows but that if a more decentralized industry joins hands with a more efficient agriculture the village may become the keystone of the nation, binding rural and urban together.

In the meantime institutional changes to accord with the growing importance of the village and the small town are rapidly being made, as has been pointed out in Chapter V and elsewhere. Commerce, banking, trade, education, social organizations, even religion are becoming more and more, though not yet by any means completely, village- and town-centered.

Parity — social and economic. But this development has brought to light other questions lurking in the background. Should the city make any return to the country for the replenishment of the nation's, if not of its own, population, by the rural areas? Should some of the urban share of the farm's gross profits, accruing from interest, rent and inheritance, be in part plowed back into soil so that in a democracy such as ours there would be in truth equality of educational and social as well as of economic and political opportunity? Is social parity the inevitable twin of the greatly desired economic parity? If these questions are affirmatively answered should not city and country alike and together face the questions as to what adjustments between those who produce food and fiber on the one hand and those who process, merchandise, and finance on the other hand, will bring a maximum remuneration and consequently a return of higher standards of living for the farmer and the nation as a whole? Such questions have ramifications which lead far afield. They involve the problem of agriculture's share in the national income, which dropped from one fifth to one twelfth in some of the post-war years, and is even now only about one eighth. They bear on almost all matters of

current public policy, and on others now in the forums of discussion, such as that of adequate occupational distribution.

Social uses of wealth. Basic to all these, of course, is the concept of the maximum social use of wealth, or if you will, a more socially equitable distribution of goods. It should be recalled, as shown in Chapter XXI, that in 1929 the farm, village, and towns accounted for practically their proportionate share, as based on population, of the retail trade of the nation. *Business Week* declared in 1931, on the basis of careful estimates, that 80 per cent of the retail trade of the nation is contributed by families with incomes of *three thousand dollars* a year or less. At the other extreme, according to estimates by the Income Tax Division of the United States Treasury, 2.5 per cent of all income earners secured 33 per cent of the net income reported, a net income from which returns on tax-exempt securities are, of course, excluded. It seems obvious that these top 2.5 per cent of the families did not contribute to retail trade anything like their proportion of income, and it is from them largely that society's savings or capital comes. Surplus capital has undoubtedly accumulated at the expense of unjustifiable human exploitation. On the other hand, it has also been put to meritorious use, as in the case of the large sums and endowments spent on our educational system (open on easier terms to more youth in the United States than in any other land), the millions lavished on philanthropy, music, art, religion, social welfare, and on the creation of our parks, public buildings, museums, libraries, and the like. It is not possible to strike an exact balance between these credit and debit items, but it is important to remind ourselves that wealth has demonstrated social usages and admitted social obligations.

An economy of abundance or scarcity. The urge to accumulate capital in essence harks back to the days when man lived in fear of famine and want, of the seven lean years that would nullify the blessings of the seven fat years. But unless or until our soil and natural resources fail, those days are gone. Some men dream while others announce the economy of abundance, the alleged resources of which range from the amazing claims of

the technocrats to the sober estimates of the Brookings Institution in its studies of *America's Capacity to Produce* and *America's Capacity to Consume*. Between these extremes are Stuart Chase and the Loeb Committee on *The National Survey of Potential Product Capacity*, which claims that the American people since 1929 have deprived themselves of goods and services to the amount of 287 billion dollars.

The conservative studies of the Brookings Institution show that in the peak year of 1929 the United States could have produced 20 per cent more than it did; and such an addition to the real wealth of that 25 per cent of the families, including a majority of farm families, with net incomes of less than \$2000, would have measurably raised the standard of living. These estimates, as the director of the studies, Dr. Edwin Nourse, pointed out in a radio address on January 5, 1935, take no account of the problematical factors devolving around what could be done if the average producing unit, farm or factory, were brought up to its highest technological and practical perfection and if it were freed of all mercantile limitations — items which play so large a part in the estimates of Messrs. Loeb and Chase.

Confessional. This much is clear. We have experienced privation, scarcity, hunger, and nakedness for half a decade while we were restricting production or even destroying goods. We have not made the best use we could of our resources. There are, and have been, throughout much of the depression, many more unemployed dollars than unemployed men. There has been some distribution of wealth through home and work relief, processing taxes, and the like. These expenditures have played their part in sustaining the shrunken volume of our business as well as providing in some measure the support of life for the victims of the depression, but at a low level indeed.

The need is obvious for the formulation of a social theory and policy regarding the use of wealth based on considerations of consumption rather than of production, and on considerations of public welfare rather than on those of maximum profit for corporate bodies or individuals. The cake must be eaten to be

kept, as was pointed out in Chapter XVI. The issues here are especially important to rural people who are, at this writing, far closer to achieving maximum production than is industry and who have seen their proportionate share of the national income dwindle despite an increase in their population.

World influences. This and some of the other questions raised have their international as well as their national roots, as is made clear by a careful study of *World Agriculture and the Depression*, by Vladimir Timoshenko.¹ He shows in detail that the prices of agricultural commodities important in foreign trade began to decline, slowly but steadily, early in the 1920's; that production of these commodities increased much more rapidly than the demand; that the consequent accumulation of surpluses was accelerated by increasing tariffs in industrial nations; that the imports of the agricultural countries were at the same time growing rapidly so that their normal favorable trade balance declined more and more until it reached the point where it could no longer take care of the interest charges on and the repayments of debts to the industrial nations; that as a result loans to these agricultural countries were drastically curtailed, and the nations were forced off the gold standard. This accelerated price declines.

Here then in briefest review is a picture on a world scale comparable to our own. Actions motivated by immediate self-interest in the protection of invested wealth, in their sum contributed to the intensification of the depression which finally engulfed the industrial as well as the agricultural nations.²

SOCIAL POLICIES FOR TODAY

This illustration carries us back from the realm of theory to that of practical policy, and it is clear that the intensity of

¹ University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1933.

² Timoshenko does not deny that monetary factors may have contributed to the difficulties, but argues that they were not exclusively or even largely responsible. His data, which are very full and carefully gathered, support beyond reasonable doubt the conclusions summarized above.

the world depression focuses the interest upon economic policy. But economics is a social science and far more closely akin to sociology than the classical economists, who lost sight of the humanity in the "average man," ever recognized. Often considerations of sociology and social psychology explain economic behavior and economic policy-making. Indeed, the interest in social policies so evident in the first half of the 1930's arises from the overemphasis upon economic values and the consequent feverish desire to regain the human values which have been sacrificed.

The first post-war platform. Eugene Davenport recognized this years ago. In November, 1918, before the echoes of the last barrages of the World War had died away, he addressed the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experimental Stations on the subject, "Wanted: A National Policy in Agriculture," and outlined the beginnings of such a policy. His first plank called for equality of educational opportunity in city and country. He asked for recognition of the American farmer "as a typical citizen, representing our largest and most fundamental industry," and as "our greatest home-builder." He asked for economic security to be achieved, not by force, "but by conference between producer, distributor, and consumer." In all, two thirds of his proposals were clearly and chiefly motivated by social and human considerations, and throughout there was emphasis upon the national interest in sound agricultural policy.

Current proposals. Human elements inject themselves also into most, if not all, of the current agricultural proposals and policies. The Farm Credit Administration was created to save homes as well as farms. The Citizens Conservation Corps by its very title indicates its objectives of saving youth from the demoralization of the depression. The recent report of its head to the President states that regardless of the \$300,000,000 worth of useful conservation work accomplished, its greatest value to the nation has been in the saving of personalities and in the building of character.

Take as another illustration, the present state of agriculture.

Had things been allowed to drift, it is probable that farms would have run down and the soil have been worn thin. Farmers able to hang on would have been forced into peasantry. After some years of this, perhaps a decade, food scarcity or at least higher prices would doubtless have reversed the trend, to the discomfiture of city people. The social losses involved in waiting for the law of supply and demand to operate would obviously be enormous.

Three choices. As an alternative to the policy of drift several proposals have been urged, such as the return to international lending and co-operation, an acceptance of the loss of foreign markets and the gearing of our farms and industry to national needs alone; or a planned middle course. These are the alternatives that Secretary Wallace has stated again and again. In his speech at Muncie, Indiana, he described them in part as follows:

Few people realize that it takes just as much planning to follow a plan of internationalism as it does the path of nationalism. The planning is of a different sort and is not as apparent to the rank and file of the people.... If we in the United States are to follow the path of internationalism, we must have both political and financial leaders in whom we have confidence. The people themselves must be in on the plan. They must be willing to stay by it not for four years only, but for at least 10 or 15 years. A plan of this sort in the United States means that certain industries which are either inefficient or have used the tariff to enjoy what essentially is a monopoly profit, will be harmed by the necessary lowering of the tariff. This means that if the majority of the people of the United States decide on internationalism as a long-time policy, they must be prepared to stand up against the political pressure coming from the minority groups which will inevitably be hard. Is it too much to ask of these groups that they read the handwriting on the wall and that they behave themselves?

In examining the path of nationalism, we find ourselves confronted with difficulties fully as great as the international course which I have just described. Under nationalism, we must be prepared to make permanent the retirement of our 50 million surplus acres of crop land. If the bulk of the people of the United States finally decide for nationalism, they must be prepared to resist firmly those special groups who try to get farmers to produce for a

foreign market which no longer exists. It is so easy to appeal to the instinctive, selfish motives of practically every group in the United States in attacking the program for reduction of acreage. Farmers unless they have studied the problem do not like it because they think they have a God-given right to produce to the limit. Railroads, commission men, packers, millers, and exporters don't like it because their profits depend in considerable measure on the volume of business; consumers don't like it because they think it increases their costs....

Instead of following either the international or national path, it is possible to follow a combination of the two.... In some ways, this seems to me to be the best. But the trouble with it is that unless we do it with our eyes wide open, we tend to get confused and to suffer the handicaps of both paths without getting the benefits....¹

It is apparent from this quotation as from all Secretary Wallace's discussions that the human problems lying behind the economic are paramount. He is thinking of what to do with the people who till the 50,000,000 acres which a nationalistic policy will throw out of production. He is giving warning of the psychological factors that will lead to special pleading no matter which course we pursue.

It is, of course, possible that a highly nationalistic policy will be forced on the United States by the international situation.

Land use and human welfare. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration is so identified in the public mind with the restriction of production that it is sometimes forgotten that it had a Program Planning Division which began the formulation of a long-time agricultural policy. This function has now been transferred to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics under the 1939 reorganization of the United States Department of Agriculture, but the leadership remains with Dr. H. R. Tolley. Late in 1934 he indicated some of the basic considerations of planning as he saw them. Included in this program is an analysis of the needs of the nation for the goods which land produces, food, fiber, wood, areas for recreation, for water supply and wild-life refuges. This analysis involves appraisal of population trends, of probable levels of living and markets here

¹ *New York Times*, November 12, 1933.

and abroad. There must next be an inventory of our resources for meeting the discovered needs, and finally a practical program to bring the resources to bear on the basic problems.

Early proposals of the National Resources Committee along these lines call for the location of industries in disadvantaged rural areas; integrating agricultural and industrial employment and also agriculture with employment on public lands; prevention of settlement of public lands unsuitable for agriculture, use of state grants-in-aid for education and other social utilities, and also federal relief funds to discourage settlement in unsuitable areas.

In addition to the National Resources Committee there are about forty states that have recently organized state planning commissions of varying degrees of efficiency. Some are proceeding within the states on much the same basis as the National Committee is dealing with the country as a whole. Their experience has brought out that regional planning is also a necessity. The Shenandoah Valley, the Tennessee Valley, and other areas transcend state lines.

There is, of course, in all this no hint as yet of the problems that may arise from rapid changes in agricultural production through advanced technology nor of the results of the possible development of artificial substitutes, especially for textile products.

The human side. There cannot be too much emphasis in all this program-building upon the human aspects, as was stated also in Chapter XIV in the discussion of the social-economics of agriculture. People live in families, neighborhoods, communities. They require social institutions. They must maintain adequate standards of living. No land policy can succeed unless the land of our nation provides this for rural people. Perhaps these desiderata can be supplied only by drastic steps in regulating the number of farmers. How many farmers do we really need? If some of the more than six million we now have are superfluous, given adequate use of soil and technique and adequate purchasing power among the buyers of food, where shall the surplus go? What shall they

do? Haphazardly, this problem like many others measurably solved itself under the unchallenged liberty of the 1920's. But now mobility of labor is dangerous, not because of lack of liberty, but because mobility correlates too highly with relief rôles.

Eventually the Program Planning Division of our National Government will have to face this issue, and when it does, the long-range planning for agriculture will be but the first of a series of plans. Industrial reorganization, including occupational planning, will become involved, for agricultural and rural life cannot come to full fruition in the national economy independent of all else.

Prosperity through scarcity. But the problem goes even deeper. There has been much unthinking criticism of the Agricultural Adjustment Act program for destroying food and fiber. It has never been claimed that such action was theoretically defensible. An achievable economy of abundance will not be won by inducing scarcity. But the A.A.A.'s is an emergency program and a self-limiting one. It is akin to restricting the production of steel or textiles or furniture, about which there has been little objection save in radical circles. Let us grant that we cannot consume all the wheat we raise. But as a nation we are short of clothing, even though we destroy cotton. We drink too little milk by half. Our diet is sadly deficient in eggs, fruit and vegetables, in large part not because of ignorance of the value of these foods, but because millions of our citizens cannot afford them. Thus is it that the economic and with it the social progress of rural America is intimately bound up with the national well-being. National well-being in turn reflects the suffering of rural America. Permanent prosperity in human and economic terms, in rural and urban, will come only when there is adequate diet for the cities and adequate returns for the country.

National interest above class. The emphasis, recurring as it does several times in this chapter, upon national considerations, is extremely important. The authors reject the idea that the good life for rural America must be or can be achieved only

by making rural America class-conscious. Such a procedure is always dangerous for a minority group, as already stated. Social safety and wisdom will come when we convince the nation that a square deal for agriculture and for rural people, in social and economic terms, is best for the nation as a whole. The authors suggest that it may be possible to effect a reconciliation of opposing rural and urban interests by formulating and carrying out a national policy for rural society: the old conflicts between urban and rural areas are historically explicable and differences in objectives, more or less superficial, are still clearly discernible. The present international economic crisis is in part the result of lack of balance between the industrial and the agricultural countries. In terms of the United States it is partly due to the collapse of rural purchasing power, again in part caused by international conditions. The share of rural and town people in the nation's retail trade in 1929 has been pointed out, and indicates the interdependence of city and country. So, too, does the very close relationship between farm income and factory payrolls, both of which ranged between 10 and 12 billion dollars annually between 1923 and 1929, and both of which fell to 5 billion dollars each in 1933 and seem to be moving at a rate of between 7 and 8 billion dollars in 1937-38. The city, which stands mainly for industry, cannot be saved without saving the country, which stands mostly for agriculture. And what is true economically is true socially as well. Parity prices, an immediate objective, are relatively unimportant. The real objective is adequate income for all the people, rural as well as urban.

Anthropologists declare that periods of stress and social change occur when the mores that control and motivate the behavior of the local, face-to-face primary groups for some reason or reasons lose their efficacy. Social stability does not return until new mores are accepted as adequate social controls. It is also true, as Professor Bryson points out, that social change is accelerated when major conflicts between important groups develop. The final resolution of these conflicts produces a new equilibrium, a changed social pattern.

Such a period was the Renaissance. Such a period was that of the political and social revolutions in England and France when the machine worker and artisan or handicraftsman joined issue; when the slogan "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" challenged monarchy; when the doctrine of *laissez faire* freed the use of capital from ancient restrictions. The present, too, is such a period; the World War has swept away the savings of generations; science has all but annihilated space and time, made the world interdependent, and given us through mass production undreamt-of potential wealth in goods, displacing entire occupations and speeding up even agricultural processes; and, finally, the ferment of democracy and its hope for the common man has spread to far-off India and China and produced in lands like Italy and Germany violent counter-movements. The task of the social scientist today is to plan, work for, and achieve the reconciliation of such conflicting social groups and tendencies and the acceptance of new mores befitting our resources, and thus help provide a new equilibrium between nation and nation, capital and labor, city and country.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. What values important to the life of the nation do you think are created or fostered in rural society?
2. What, if any, is the justification for equalization plans of financing rural social institutions, such as schools, hospitals or libraries, by moneys collected in taxes or otherwise from citizens who do not reside in rural territory?
3. What is the main agricultural policy or platform of the National Democratic, Republican, and Socialist parties, as shown by their last statements or conventions?
4. Answer the same question in terms of the state platforms of these parties for your state.
5. What are chief issues on which rural and urban interests are most likely to clash? Can these interests be reconciled in some kind of a national policy? If yes, how? If not, why?
6. Name some tests or criteria by which you are willing to judge as to whether changes in rural society are in the direction of progress.
7. Which of Secretary Wallace's three alternatives for American economic policy do you favor? Why?

8. Outline an adequate land utilization policy for your state, for the nation.
9. Look up and report on the proposals of the Planning Commission of your state. Discuss in detail the sections dealing with agriculture and rural life.

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APPENDIX I

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following books are suggested as worthwhile for general reference throughout a course in rural sociology.

The first of these is the three-volume *Readings in Rural Sociology* by Sorokin, Zimmerman, and Galpin (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1933). This work assembles a vast amount of material and data from foreign and historical sources and comments upon it. Students of rural sociology will greatly enrich their understanding of the subject by the use of this work. The second last text listed below is based on the main features of this work.

Second, the authors suggest that their own *Rural Social Trends* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1933) and *Rural Trends in Depression Years* by Brunner and Lorge (New York, Columbia University Press, 1937) be used. These are the reports of the second and third surveys of 140 village-centered farming communities, made in 1930 and 1936 respectively. They contain much detailed factual and statistical material which could not be included in this work.

Third, the following texts in rural sociology may also be used as reference works.

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In addition, it is urged that each class make use of the bulletins, especially, of the colleges of agriculture of the states from which its students are drawn. Most of these colleges have made and published

quite a number of excellent studies of numerous social and socio-economic topics. The total amount of this material is far too extensive to permit of listing in the bibliographies at the end of each chapter, although some of the approximately 600 different bulletins are noted throughout this text.

RURAL SOCIAL RESEARCH

There is a growing interest in rural social research and in practical community surveys conducted for purposes of program-building, school curriculum construction, and the like. Therefore, several references are given under this heading.

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The basic problems underlying the relations of social science teachers and the educational process in a changing world.

Brunner, E. de S., *Surveying Your Community*. New York, Harper, 1925.

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Chaddock, Robert E., *Principles and Methods of Statistics*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925.

Standard textbook of statistical methods, with detailed applications to social research.

Fry, C. Luther, *The Technique of Social Investigation*. New York, Harper, 1934.

The best single work in the field covering all phases of the subject for serious students.

Gee, Wilson (ed.), *Research in the Social Sciences*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1929.

A group of brilliant essays on fundamental objectives and methods in the social sciences. See particularly Professor Robert E. Park's lecture on Sociology; Professor Robert E. Chaddock's on Statistics.

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This work summarizes the opinions of many authorities on different research problems.

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Essays by various authors on the uses of statistics. Note especially Marshall's article dealing with attempts to apply statistics to evaluating the work of courts.

Attention is also called to the series of bulletins issued by the Social Science Research Council, 230 Park Avenue, New York City, dealing with the scope and method of research in phases of rural society.

The titles follow:

Research in Farm Family Living.

Research in Rural Institutions.

Research in Rural Population.

Research in Rural Social Work.

Research in Rural Social Organization.

Each of these contains a general introduction dealing with the scope and method of research in the field covered by the bulletin. Following this from 15 to 30 research projects are written up in detail. These publications were prepared under the direction of the Advisory Committee on Social and Economic Research in Agriculture of the Social Science Research Council. They were issued between May, 1932, and April, 1933.

RURAL LIFE IN FOREIGN LANDS

An increasing amount of work in rural sociology and research is being carried on in foreign lands, especially in Asia. Much of it is of value especially to graduate students in American institutions. Moreover, an increasing number of foreign students interested in rural sociology are attending American colleges and universities. A brief bibliography is, therefore, appended on Rural Life in Foreign Lands.

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APPENDIX II

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR TERM PAPERS

BELOW are listed a few suggested topics for term papers, so described because they are more ambitious than the topics for discussion listed at the end of each chapter.

Many of them are capable of being made projects for two or more students working together.

The objective of these topics is twofold:

a. To familiarize the student with using readily available data such as that in the censuses of population, agriculture, and retail distribution and in the reports of various state agencies.

b. To assemble information about the subjects discussed in this book in terms of the locale of the institution or the students, which can be used in teaching.

These and similar topics have been used for ten years in the classes of one of the authors and in that time there has never been a year in which one or more of the papers produced were not published in educational or scientific journals or even as state reports.

1. What is the effect of improved transportation facilities on the economic or social life of selected agricultural villages?

2. What have been the social effects of corporation farming upon a given community?

3. Compare all rural counties of a state with (*a*) all others; (*b*) those all rural except for city of 25,000 or over. Discuss significant differences in size of family, illiteracy, home ownership, age distribution, farm values, types of farming, etc. Compare these results also by distance of counties from cities of over 25,000 population.

4. The movement of population in a rural area and its effect on rural institutions. (A similar study will be found in the last three chapters of *Diagnosing the Rural Church*, C. L. Fry, which should be read before undertaking this subject, though no such elaborate treatment is required for a term paper.)

5. Make a census study of land values by counties within a given state in relation to tenancy, school attendance, illiteracy, number of foreign-born farmers, gainfully employed males under 15 and under 10 years of age and over 65. (If desired, some of these factors may be omitted. This topic is typical of a number of census studies that can be developed according to interest of the student.)

6. Compare total agricultural products by counties for a given state with per pupil school expense, teachers' salaries, presence of county agent or public health nurse, or county health unit, county library, etc.

7. Discuss results of agricultural depression for a selected group of counties by comparing 1920, 1925, and 1930 census of agriculture for such items as farm population, farm value, acreage — total and improved — tenancy, debt, change in number of farms, etc. Add to this the 1935 census when available.

8. Relate the growth and decline of villages in a state or group of counties to type of road, nearness of city, transportation facilities, value of farm land, etc.

9. Make a study of the increase of urban newspaper circulation in rural counties surrounding a city of over 100,000 population.

10. Why did your family move from the country to the city (or from the city to the country)? A family case study involving complete listing of the pros and cons entering into the decision.

11. Put this question to a limited number of families known to you, using a brief questionnaire.

12. Study the trends in rural divorce either from the census or from local court records. Select a recognized area as a county, group of counties, or a state.

13. Study changes in the age of marriage by four-year periods from 1900 on, using records of a single town or county. Interpret results.

14. Make a study of the dependent families of a given rural area; the number, cause, etc., and adequacy and efficiency of relief.

15. What has been the effect of school consolidation on the social life of some new school district of which you know?

16. What social and economic factors should be taken into account in determining the area of a proposed school district? Work out a procedure for consolidation (apart from administrative considerations). This problem can be stated also in terms of health districts, larger parishes, etc.

17. For a given area, as a county, group of counties or a state, work out a series of urban-rural comparisons, and explain the results. Such comparisons might be of birth and death rates, age and sex groups, fecundity, divorce, literacy, school attendance, home ownership, per capita retail sales in 1930 and 1933, etc.

18. Trace the effect of denominational strife on community social organization.

19. Select a group of rich rural counties within a state and a group of poor counties. Select on basis of average value per acre or other

suitable criterion. Compare the two groups on per pupil school expense, presence of county agent, county library, public health, school nurse, and county Y.M.C.A., etc.

20. Select one or two communities. Where have families gone who have left these communities? Did they sell or rent? Who took their places? Trace young people who left when unmarried. Where did they go? Why? Education? Present occupation? Account for any considerable differences found between communities, if two are selected. Trace, if possible, effect of these changes in population on one or two social institutions.

21. Changes in the life of a selected rural area 1913-35. Social, economic, and religious. Any earlier base limit date may be taken.

22. Sketch the changes in the standard of living in one lifetime.

23. What forms rural public opinion? Evaluate such possible factors as the urban press, the farm press, urban propaganda agencies, radio, opinion of local leaders, movies, sermons, etc. This should be based on field work or questionnaire.

24. Analyze the number of farmers holding county offices or serving in state legislature for a selected number of counties. Compare proportion of office-holders who are farmers to proportion of farmers among gainfully employed.

25. A comparison of the number of federal and state agencies available and the number used over a period of years in a group of selected rural communities. If possible, state reasons for use or lack of use.

26. Discuss the effect of the auto on community boundaries.

27. Compare total organizational membership of a given community with eligible population and evaluate each organization in public regard by membership, average investment of time. Check by date of organization for each agency studied.

28. Study the leaders in a county or in a village community, who they are, their length of residence, organizational connections and reasons for leadership.

29. A study and evaluation of the methods used by towns and villages to attract farmers to their trade center.

30. Make a thorough case study of a successful rural P.T.A. or other social organization functioning in a given community.

31. Study the range of travel of a given community within a year and its relation to socialization.

32. Study the church, school or other social institution in the community from the point of view of the people in the community, their attitude toward its function, and toward its success or failure.

33. Write a case study of some conflict situation in a rural community — its cause, rise, development, crises, and settlement.

34. Write a case study of the changing function of a neighborhood, hamlet or small village in relation to a large village, town or city. What adaptations has the small center made? What functions has it lost? What gained? What is its probable future?
35. Make a study of the amount, cause, control, and social effect of juvenile delinquency in a rural community, township or county.

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